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CROWN GEMS OF FRANCE

EDITED BY

EDMUND GOSSE, LL.D.

Illustrated with

PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAITS

and

TEXT PORTRAITS

with Notes by

OCTAVE UZANNE

Edmond About

THE KING OF THE MOUNTAINS

Translated from the French of
EDMOND ABOUT

With a Critical Introduction by
ANDREW LANG

ILLUSTRATED

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EDMOND ABOUT AND GREECE

EDMOND ABOUT visited Greece in 1851. He seems to have set out with school-boy and Byronic ideas of Greece, and to have been disappointed. He found that the women were plain, that the classic Ilissus was "a little damp when it rains," that there was, and could be, no Hellenic aristocracy. A generation earlier, every one, in the spirit of *égalité*, had been equally drubbed by the Turks, and an aristocracy cannot be made out of such materials. He admitted, in contradiction of a German theory, that the modern Greeks are not Slavs, but he had little else that was good to say for them. Even Greek courage is "prudent and reflective"; Canaris is a rare exception. Greek love of liberty is mere hatred of order: Greek equality is mere jealousy. "This important person is a traitor, the other a thief; the next suborns murder: the purest have infamous morals. No Greek is esteemed in Greece." The Greeks abroad are patriots, the Greeks at home are poli-

ticians. Their chief concern is to shut out from Greece the foreign or heterochthonous Greeks. A Hellene of the Isles, who may have fought in the War of Independence, but has not settled in the country before 1838, may not even hold the post of a rural policeman. (Law of February 3, 1844.) As for honesty, "Greek" is a proverb for a cheat. As a Whig observer says of the Highlanders, about 1750, the very poorest country people are the most honest. "The most honest men of Athens would be suspicious characters in France and England." The forests are regularly burned, and, of all things, it is dangerous to cross a river by a bridge. Under "Justice" we read, "There is no justice in Greece." As to finance, "Greece has been bankrupt from her birth."

As to Brigandage, the King (the Bavarian Otho) has people suspected of brigandage about his person. It is a political weapon. A man who wishes to upset a Ministry has a few Bœotian villages burned, and then denounces the Minister. The Government then tortures Bœotians who have voted against it. An instance occurred in 1852. A Deputy, M. Chourmouzis, gave a catalogue of the tortures in the Assembly; they will all be found in *The King of the Mountains*. An Eubœan brigand, chief of a large

band, actually threatened Athens, as Keppoch, in 1689, threatened Inverness. But a sub-prefect on his travels is as awkward a customer as a mountain robber.

This is a brief summary of a few of the things which About said about the Greece of Otho, in his *La Grèce Contemporaine.* The book is undeniably witty, but much of it is conceived in the spirit of the Society Journalist. M. About was particularly facetious under the solemn shade of the Lion-Gate of Mycenæ. The lions reminded him of his early sketches in school note-books. "The infancy of Art is very like the art of infancy." The Atridæ are "cette race de coquins," "un gibier de cour d'assises." The point of view is that of the Fourth Form. Certainly About was not a sympathetic critic. *La Grèce Contemporaine* made a noise. The author would have been less safe in Greece than M. Daudet in Tarascon. He replied to the cries of an infuriated people by *The King of the Mountains*, which did not pour oil into their wounds. Unhappily his caricature was presently too well justified by the Marathon massacre. No further from Athens than the scene of her most famous victory, the salvation of Greece as of Europe, several English tourists were captured, and, when their ransom did not arrive,

were massacred. The murderers were hunted down and shot, the death-blow of organized brigandage in Greece, but the mismanagement and the scandal had been terrible.

On the whole subject, Great Britain had very little right to throw the first stone at Hellas. Up to, and after, the union of the crowns under James VI, the Border had been a picture of the Græco-Turkish frontier. Jocky o' Peartree, Jock o' the Side, Kinmont Willie and company, were merely Klephts, or Palikaris. As late as the end of the seventeenth century, Scott of Satchells defends the memory of these heroes as not thieves, but freebooters. They were the outposts and sentries of Scotland, the best of light cavalry, though—

> "They sought the beeves that made their broth,
> In England and in Scotland both."

Harden would harry Elibank as readily as a Greek brigand would burn a Greek village. In the old Romaic songs, in Passow's, Fauriel's, and other collections, the women deplore the raids of Greek brigands as much as of Turks. (Some examples are translated by Miss Garnett. The language of the ballads, and of the country people, is the natural Romaic, the ancient rural dialect of Greece, with Turkish and Slavonic contamina-

tions. It is, necessarily, more difficult to understand than the Greek of the Press, which, practically, consists of classical words, with modern western grammar, idiom, and newspaper stereotyped phrases.)

The Highlands, like Greece, were given to brigandage down to 1745. We have not Whig evidence alone. The Duke of Gordon, in a letter to Lovat, remarks that cattle robbery is almost universal. MacDonnell of Barisdale organized theft on a large scale. The recesses of Knoydart were the home of this King of the Mountains. His men raided from Sutherland to Stirlingshire, having branch establishments in Rannoch and Lochaber, and joining hands with the Macgregors about Loch Lomond. Yet Barisdale engraved verses from Virgil on his broadswords, and was intimate with the Countess of Sutherland. Like the King of the Mountains, he was an amateur of torture, and had invented a new kind of rack. The opinion of the country, as the Memoir of Cluny shows, saw little or no moral wrong in stealing cattle, while deprecating ordinary theft. A traveller was safer all over the Highlands than in Hampstead, for the idea of capturing people and holding them to ransom was alien to the Highland genius. Except on this one point, the

Border, three hundred years ago, and the Highlands of 1745, were precisely on the moral level of the King of the Mountains. In one way they were worse, for the Scottish brigand chiefs were educated, and were men of birth, while the Greeks have no *noblesse.* Consequently some of the educated Highland leaders, unlike their men, were demoralized, and were guilty of private and public treacheries, which would have made the hair of Hadji Stavros stand on end with horror.

The cause of this posture of affairs, in Scotland, as in Greece, was the existence of an ancient in face of a modern and orderly society. The Turkish conquest had never conquered the Klephts of the hills any more than the law had reached Knoydart. "Take care of yourselves in Sutherland, the Law has come to Tain," wrote a friend of the old state of things. The Klephts always represented a race otherwise subdued: they supplied the most resolute and ruthless fighters of the War of Independence. They could not easily sink into peaceful orderly citizens, and had no turn for the learned professions which the Greeks prefer to more laborious industries. The impoverished kingdom could not easily put them down, and Klephtdom, like Highland cattle-stealing, or Border moss-trooping, was the nurse of soldiers. In spite of the

example of Lochiel, the chiefs could not be induced to frown on practices which kept their following always in military practice. Like the MacDonnells, the brigands were devout; like all these predatory races, they had abundance of home-made poetry, ballads of love, war, and robbery, popular tales and legends. If they were on friendly terms with some Athenian politicians, in that respect they only the more resembled the mosstroopers. King James VI is said to have made use of Jocky o' Peartree. Greece was not abnormal, she was belated—that was all.

A people of extraordinarily keen wits, a people with a hereditary turn for unscrupulous *finesse*, for city life, for the bar and the rostrum, has been held under a barbarous, cruel, and disorderly domination for nearly four hundred years. When that yoke was taken off from without or shattered from within, the vices of slaves could not be eradicated in a moment, nor could order, among the wild mountain men, be at once imposed. The Bavarian King was unfit for his almost impossible task. Even the mountaineers had not the old Highland devotion to the ancient houses of their chiefs. Everything was chaotic, and the worst corruptions of democracy and civilization were developed among the Athenian politicians; from the days of

Themistocles a race not remarkable for scruples. The veering enthusiasms of the Agora remain what they were when Alcibiades said, about Democracy, "Concerning manifest absurdity, why waste words?" The peculiarity of Greece was the existence of the extremely modern within four or five miles of the extremely archaic—the robber bands of Hadji Stavros. It was as if the MacDonnells and Camerons had tenanted the Pentlands in the age of David Hume and Lord Monboddo. A satirist, like About, could not have a finer theme, and his *King of the Mountains* gained a wide popularity. With illustrations by Doré, a version appeared in a cheap English magazine. Swift would have rejoiced in About's opportunity. He could make cosmopolitan fun. The German botanist, so brave, simple, and honest, deeply in love without knowing it, is the literary ideal of the German, before the war of 1870. The British banker's wife, with her appetite, her ungracious ingratitude, her slogan, "I am English, I will write to the *Times*," is a fair enough caricature of that terrible being—the rich, middle-aged, middle-class British female. It is not possible to defend her, and it does not seem easy to reform her. She is inaccessible to ideas; but is Mary-Ann, the blonde *Miss Anglaise*, to grow up even as her mother?

Mary-Ann's daughters, or granddaughters, are learned archæologists at this day, and fight over the ancient Greek theatre with German professors. English girls in Greece are not so rare as when Miss Skene was taken for a ghost in the darkling Treasure House of Atreus, and frightened tourists away. Poor Photini, with her thick waist and flat feet, is a reaction against the Byronic Maid of Athens. The grave irony of the King of the Mountains is worthy of Swift: his item of expenditure, "Repairs of the road to Thebes, which has become impracticable, and where, unfortunately, we found no travellers to rob," is inimitable. Rob Roy never would have dreamed of repairing the road to Aberfeldy. "Paid to journalists" is also good: Rob did not finance the *Caledonian Mercury*, and the King's sketch of a theory for subsidizing the Lower House, and reorganizing Greece on a basis of black-mail is far beyond the loftiest conception of Barisdale. Pericles, the officer of carabineers, is perfect, "had education, spoiled by the living in town," sunk from brigandage to pocket-picking. The tortures suggested for the German (pp. 245–249) are carefully rehearsed, as has been said, from a speech made in the Greek Lower Chamber, February, 1852, cat and all. The sudden outbreak of treason against the brigand

King represents About's idea of Greek loyalty and gratitude from the days of Aristides and Themistocles. It was impossible among the Highland clans (despite an exception in 1746), owing to the chiefs' hereditary patriarchal authority. But Hadji Stavros has no more sacred hold over his crew than John Silver had in *Treasure Island.* The fight around the cave, and the attempt to escape by the water-fall, are much in the vein of Stevenson, and do credit to About's versatility. Though, as he says, the truest histories are not always those which have come to pass, the massacre of Marathon proved that About did not deal in mere mythology. To understand Greece, is, of course, to pardon her, and gratitude to the mother of art, poetry, freedom, civilization, the bulwark of Europe against the East, must make us not only forgive, but help and hope for the cause of the little kingdom. *La Grèce Contemporaine* and *Le Roi des Montagnes* are, in short, caricatures of the same amusingly unscrupulous sort as Dickens's *American Notes* and *Martin Chuzzlewit.* We barbarians never have adored Greek character, old or new. We find the valour of even Homeric heroes "prudent and reflective." We remember the double-dealing of Alcibiades and Themistocles with distaste, and forget the parallel iniquities of Marl-

borough, Sunderland, and Godolphin. Human nature does not really differ much anywhere, but we are especially sensitive to our own faults when exhibited by the sons of the Achæans.

ANDREW LANG.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

EDMOND FRANÇOIS VALENTIN ABOUT *was born at Dieuze, in the Meurthe, on the 14th of February, 1828. He was the son of a grocer; early in boyhood he showed great capacity for study. In 1848 he entered the École Normale, having no competitor above him except Hippolyte Taine. In 1851 he joined the French School in Athens, and resided there until 1853, when he returned to Paris, and adopted literature as his profession. He wrote his experiences of Greek society in a sparkling and satiric volume, "La Grèce Contemporaine," 1855, which gave great offence in Athens, but was widely read in other parts of Europe. This was presently followed by the lively romance of "Tolla Feraldi," by "Les Mariages de Paris," which enjoyed a mad success, by "Le Roi des Montagnes," by "Germaine," and by "Les Échasses de Maître Pierre." All these entertaining productions flowed from About's fertile pen between 1855 and 1858. He has been called a candid friend of the Second Em-*

pire, but his candour did not prevent his being one of Napoleon III's favourite writers, or from his being introduced to court society at Compiègne. He was a personal friend of M. Émile Ollivier, and enthusiastically supported the declaration of war with Germany. In the meantime he had found his way to the heart of the public with a series of fantastic and farcical stories, among which the most celebrated are "L'Homme à l'Oreille Cassée," "Madelon," "Trente et Quarante," "La Vieille Roche," and "Les Mariages de Province." He essayed political economy also, and in 1866 published a treatise, "Le Progrès," which was much read, and in 1868 "L'ABC du Travailleur." His "Causeries," moreover, published in 1865–66, were characteristic and successful. Just before the war broke out, About issued a fascinating study of Egypt, "Le Fellah," 1869. The fall of the Empire and the agony of France were blows from which About never entirely recovered. He suffered particularly from the loss of his estate at Saverne, in Alsace, which he had bought in 1858 and had made his country home. He had always opposed the Ultramontanes bitterly, and in politics had been a Republican at heart. But although he recognised the Government, his old record told against him, and in the renovated France he

found no place. He had been assured at school by one of his tutors, whom his smartness had exasperated, "You will never be anything but a small Voltaire." For the future, About mainly tried to support the parallel by his active propaganda against the clerical party. For this purpose he now gave the principal part of his time to directing and writing the "XIX^me^ Siècle," and was of considerable influence in opposing the Government of the 16th of May. In 1878 About was elected president of the Société des Gens de Lettres. In 1880 he published a fine political and patriotic novel, "Le Roman d'un Brave Homme." About was elected to the French Academy, where he succeeded Jules Sandeau, on the 23d of January, 1884. Unhappily, he died, before he could be received at the Institute, on the 16th of January, 1885. He had suffered from a long and painful illness, and recently from distressing disputes with the proprietor of his periodical, the "XIX^me^ Siècle." His latest works were "Le Décaméron du Salon," 1882; "Quinze Journées au Salon," 1883; and a charming account of a journey to Constantinople, entitled "De Pontoise à Stamboul," 1884.

E. G.

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THE KING OF THE MOUNTAINS

THE KING OF THE MOUNTAINS

CHAPTER I

MR. HERMANN SCHULTZ

At about six in the morning of July 3, 1860, while I was watering my petunias, and thinking of nothing in particular, I perceived coming towards me, a tall, beardless, fair-haired young fellow, wearing a German cap and gold-rimmed spectacles. A loose alpaca overcoat hung limply about his body like a sail round a mast after the wind has suddenly died down. He wore no gloves, and his coarse leather shoes had such wide soles that each foot seemed to rest on a little flagstone all to itself.

A large porcelain pipe peeped out of his side-pocket, its shape being clearly discernible under the light, shiny material. It did not even occur to me to ask this stranger if he ever had studied at a German university, and I set down my watering-pot and welcomed him with a solemn "Guten Morgen,"

"Monsieur," he replied in villainous French, "my name is Hermann Schultz; I have been passing some months in Greece, and your famous book has been my constant companion."

I was greatly flattered by this agreeable prelude to the conversation. The young man's voice seemed to me more melodious than Mozart's music, and I cast a look of beaming gratitude up at his gold-rimmed glasses.

Reader, mine! You cannot imagine how fond we authors are of those who take the trouble to peruse and study our effusions. As for me, if ever I have wished to be rich, it has been in order to assure an income to all who have read my works. I took the excellent youth by the hand and pushed him gently into the best of our two garden-chairs. He told me he was a botanist, and in the employ of the Botanical Society of Hamburg. While in Greece, whither he had been sent on a trial trip, he had, besides filling his herbarium, carefully studied the country, its people, and even its zoology. The simplicity of his descriptions, his concise yet just remarks, reminded me not a little of old Herodotus. He expressed himself rather awkwardly, but with a frankness that distinctly inspired confidence, and he emphasized his words like a person deeply convinced of

the veracity of his assertions. He was able to give me news, if not of every one in Athens, at least of the principal people mentioned in my work. In the course of conversation he let fall certain general ideas that appeared to me all the more judicious because I had been myself the first to conceive them. In short, at the end of an hour's chat we became fast friends.

I do not know which of us was the first to mention the word *brigandage*. Travellers who know Italy talk of painting; those who have visited England, of commerce—in a word, each country has its specialty, and Greece is essentially the happy hunting-ground of the brigand.

"My dear sir," I asked this excellent incognito, "did you fall in with the brigands? Is it true, as people declare, that they still exist in Greece?"

"Only too true," he answered gravely. "I can speak from experience, since I passed a fortnight in the power of the terrible Hadji Stavros, called 'the King of the Mountains.' If you are at leisure, and have no objection to listen to a long yarn, I am quite ready to relate to you the details of my adventure. You may make what use you like out of the material—a romance, a short story, or rather, since it is a true history, an

additional chapter to the remarkable volume in which you have gathered together so many curious facts."

"You are really too good," said I, "and I promise you I shall pay the utmost attention to your narrative. Let us go into my study, it will be cooler than in the garden, and we shall not miss the scent of the mignonette or of the sweet peas."

He followed me willingly enough, humming a folk song to himself as we went along :

> "Down to the plain came the black-eyed Klepht,
> His burnished gun hung by his side ;
> To the vultures he cried, 'Oh ! stay ye with me,
> For a pasha of Athens your feast soon shall be ! '"

My friend sat down on the divan with his legs folded tailor-fashion, under him, like an Arab story-teller. He took off his overcoat the better to cool himself, lighted his pipe, and forthwith began his tale. I, at my desk, stenographed his dictation.

I always have been of a confiding nature, especially with those who pay me compliments. Nevertheless, the amiable stranger told me such astonishing things that I frequently asked myself if he were not making game of me. But no ! He spoke so sincerely, his blue eyes gazed at me so

frankly, that scepticism, disarmed, soon faded away. He talked on till half-past twelve, only interrupting himself twice or thrice to relight his pipe. He smoked away as mechanically as the chimney of a steam-engine, and appeared as reposeful and beaming amid his clouds of smoke as Jupiter in the fifth act of *Amphitryon.* Then breakfast was announced; Hermann took his place opposite mine, and any slight suspicion I might have entertained disappeared before his appetite. I said to myself, a good digestion rarely accompanies a bad conscience. The young German was too genial a guest to be an unfaithful narrator, and his appetite was distinctly his brevet of veracity. Under this agreeable impression, while offering him some strawberries, I frankly told him that for an instant or so I had doubted him. His answer was merely an angelic smile.

I passed the whole day closeted with my new friend, and yet the time never seemed to hang heavily on my hands. At five in the evening he extinguished his pipe, put on his overcoat, and, pressing my hand, wished me good-bye. I answered him by a cheerful *Au revoir.*

"No!" said he, shaking his head; "I leave to-day by the seven o'clock train, and dare not hope ever to see you again."

"Send me your address. I have not yet given up the pleasure of travelling, and I may go to Hamburg."

"Unfortunately, I don't know myself where I shall pitch my tent. Germany is a big country, and it is by no means certain that I shall long remain a citizen of Hamburg."

"But if I publish your story I must at least send you a copy."

"Don't give yourself that trouble. As soon as the book appears it will be pirated at Leipzig, at Wolfgang Gerhard's, and I shall read it. Adieu!"

After he left I carefully went over the narrative he had dictated. Some of the details were improbable, but nothing contradicted absolutely what I had seen and heard during my own visit to Greece.

Yet I had some scruples ere I gave the manuscript to the printers. Supposing some errors had crept into Hermann's story! As editor, was I not to a certain degree responsible? If I published without revision the history of the *King of the Mountains*, should I not expose myself to the paternal reprimands of the *Journal des Débats*, to the contradictions of Athenian journalists, to the protests of the *Spectator of the East*? That

last-named, far-seeing paper already had informed its readers that I was hump-backed : was I to offer it the opportunity of declaring me to be blind as well?

In the midst of my perplexity, I decided to make two copies of the manuscript. One I sent to a trustworthy man, an Athenian, Mr. Patriotis Pseptis. I begged him to point out to me without hesitation, and with Greek sincerity, all the pitfalls my young friend might have led me into, and moreover promised to insert his answer at the end of the volume.

Meanwhile, I deliver up to public curiosity the exact text of Hermann's story. Not a word will I change. The most glaring improbabilities, on the contrary, will be respected. The mere fact of constituting myself the apologist of the young German would render me his collaborator. I therefore retire discreetly from the scene, leaving all honours to him. My responsibility is discharged. It is Hermann who now speaks to you. Imagine him, therefore, reader, seated before you, smoking his porcelain pipe, and beaming at you from behind his gold-rimmed glasses.

CHAPTER II

PHOTINI

You can judge easily for yourself, from the dilapidated state of my clothes, that I am not rich. My father was an innkeeper that was ruined by the railways. When times were good there was bread and to spare on the shelf. But when it was otherwise we had to content ourselves with potatoes. And please to remember there were six of us, all furnished with excellent grinders, and as voracious as young ravens. Great therefore were the family rejoicings on the day when I successfully competed for an appointment in the gift of the directors of our Botanical Gardens. Not only did my leaving home increase the miserable pittance that my brothers shared between them, but I was also to have a salary of ten pounds a month, besides a capital of twenty pounds down for travelling expenses. This *was* fortune. The family no longer called me "the doctor," but thanks to this increase of wealth they deemed me worthy of the

title of "cattle merchant!" My brothers were quite sure that when I returned from Athens I should be elevated to the rank of Professor at the University.

My father's hopes shaped themselves otherwise. He expected that when I returned it would be as a married man. He evidently had not been an innkeeper for nothing. During the course of his career he had seen more than one romantic affair, and was persuaded that fortunes were to be picked up on the high-roads. At least three times a week he told us the story of the marriage of Princess Ypsoff with Lieutenant Reynauld. The Princess, her two maids, and her courier had occupied his first floor, for which she paid twenty florins a day. The young Frenchman had a garret at the top of the house, and was charged a florin and a half, everything inclusive. Nevertheless love overcame all social barriers between the happy pair, and in a month the Princess eloped with the Lieutenant. My father never doubted but that the romantic episode ended properly before the hymeneal altar. Looking at me with paternal partiality, the dear old boy fancied that I was in every way superior to the lucky soldier, and did not for a moment doubt that I should also fall in love with a Princess that would prove a beneficent fairy to us all.

If she did not introduce herself to me at once at some *table d'hôte* or other, I should surely meet her in a train; perhaps even on board a steamer. In short, he contemplated my future under the rosiest aspects. The evening before I left home we drank a bottle of old Rhenish, and by chance the last drop was poured into my glass, a sure sign of the realization of his flattering dreams, and also, that I should be married within the year. Far from me was it to destroy these illusions—so I did not even hint that princesses were not given to travel third-class, nor that they were hardly to be found in the humble inns that I should be obliged to frequent.

The truth is, I arrived at the Piræus without having met with the shadow of an adventure.

Thanks to the army of occupation, prices were enormously high in Athens just then, and hotels such as the Angleterre, Orient, and Des Étrangers out of the question.

I had a letter of introduction to the Chancellor of the Prussian Legation, and he was good enough to get lodgings for me. The house was at the corner of Hermes Street and the Palace Square, and belonged to a pastry-cook named Christodulos, who charged me four pounds a month for food and lodging. Christodulos, an

old Palikar, had won the Iron Cross during the War of Independence. He was the Lieutenant of his company, and received his pay behind his counter. He wore the national costume, consisting of the red cap and blue tassel, the vest embroidered with silver, the white skirt, and golden gaiters—and thus gorgeously attired sold ices and cakes. Maroula, his wife, like all Greek women past fifty, was enormously fat. In the days when the war was still raging and the sex was at a premium, he had bought her for eighty piastres. Born in the island of Hydra, she dressed like an Athenian in a black velvet jacket and a light-coloured skirt, with a bright-coloured handkerchief twisted in the plaits of her hair. Neither Christodulos nor his wife knew a word of German, but their son Dimitrius, a guide, dressed in the French fashion, understood and spoke a little of most of the European dialects. For the matter of that I was not in need of any interpreter. Without having received the gift of tongues, I am something of a polyglot, and can chatter with tolerable fluency in Greek, as well as in English, French, and Italian. My hosts were excellent people, not a rare thing in Athens. They furnished me with a little white-washed room, a wooden table, two straw-seated chairs, a mattress,

which was good if thin, a blanket and cotton sheets. A wooden bedstead is an article with which Greeks easily dispense, and we lived in native fashion. The bill of fare was extremely simple. In the morning a cup of salep. At mid-day a dish of meat accompanied by plenty of olives and salt fish. For supper, we had vegetables, honey, and cakes. There was plenty of jam in the house, and from time to time I evoked the memory of the Fatherland by treating myself to a leg of lamb with currant-jelly. I need not tell you that my pipe was my constant companion, and that Athenian tobacco is much better than French. I was reconciled to my quarters at Christodulos's by the excellent quality of the Santorinos wine, which he unearthed from some place I never could discover. I am not much of an expert, and my education on this head had been unhappily somewhat neglected. Still I think I can safely affirm that the wine in question would have been appreciated at a king's table. It is as yellow as gold, transparent as the topaz; it shines like the sun, and beams upon you with the smile of a child. It absolutely lighted up the table, my dear sir, and we needed no other candle. I see it before me now in the bulky flagon, which stood in the middle of the

oil-cloth with which my economical hosts replaced the ordinary table-cloth. I never drank much of it because it soon flew to the head ; yet at the end of the meal I found myself reciting Anacreontic verses, and discovering traces of beauty even in Maroula's full-moon face.

I took my meals with Christodulos and the other boarders. There were four of us besides a day-boarder. The first floor was divided into four rooms, the best of which was occupied by a French archæologist, M. Hippolyte Mérinay. If all Frenchmen were like him, the race must be a wretched one indeed. He was a little man of any age between eighteen and forty-five, red-haired, very mild, a great talker, and he had the atrocious habit of catching hold of the person to whom he was speaking with a pair of warm clammy hands. Two ruling passions, archæology and philanthropy, divided his soul, and of course he belonged to a number of learned and benevolent societies. All the same, apostle of charity as he was supposed to be, and certainly in very affluent circumstances, I don't remember having seen him give a penny to a beggar. As regards his archæological acquirements, I am inclined to think they were greater than his love of humanity. He had been crowned by I don't know what provincial Academy for a

monograph on the price of paper in the days of Orpheus. Encouraged by this success, he had come to Greece to collect materials for a more important work, having the ambition to decide upon the quantity of oil that had been consumed by the lamp of Demosthenes while he was writing his second *Philippic*.

My two other neighbours were not nearly so learned, and cared little for the things of the past. Giacomo Fondi was a poor Maltese employed by one of the Consulates, and earned six pounds a month by sealing letters. Nature, who has peopled Malta with a race destined to furnish street-porters to the East, had given poor Fondi the arms and hands of the Milo of Crotona. He was born to wield a club, and not to burn sticks of sealing-wax.

This wandering Islander never was in his right place except at meal-times. He helped Maroula to lay the table, and I scarcely need say that he always brought in the viands with outstretched arms. He ate like a hero of the *Iliad*, and I never shall forget the way in which he smacked his jaws, and dilated his nostrils, or how his eyes glittered, or how his thirty-two dazzling white teeth suggested formidable millstones of which his jaw might have been the mill. I must con-

fess that I remember very little of his conversation. It was easy to reach the limit of his intelligence, but quite impossible to discover that of his appetite. Christodulos gained nothing by boarding him for four years, although he made him pay ten francs extra a month for his food. The insatiable Maltese devoured every day, after dinner, an enormous plateful of nuts, which he cracked by simply pressing them between his forefinger and thumb. Our host, old Christodulos, although a prosaic fellow, watched the performance with a look of fearful admiration. He trembled for his fast-disappearing dessert, yet was proud to see at his table so prodigious a nut-cracker. Giacomo's face would have suited one of those toys made to surprise and scare children. He was not as dark as a negro, but the difference of shade was not striking. His front hair touching his eyebrows looked like a sort of cap. By a curious contrast the foot, the ankle, and the leg of this Caliban were so finely formed, that a sculptor might well have envied them; but these details did not particularly interest us.

I'll only just mention little William Lobster. He was a twenty-year-old cherub who hailed from the States, fair, rosy, and fat. The House of Lobster and Sons of New York had sent him to

the East to learn export trade. The day-time he spent at Philip's office ; at night he read Emerson. The first rays of dawn saw him practising pistol-shooting at Socrates' gallery.

John Harris, little Lobster's uncle on the mother's side, was certainly the most interesting member of our colony. The first time I dined with him I understood America. John was born in Vandalia, in Illinois. From the first he had breathed the life-giving air of the New World, which is as intoxicating as champagne, and which, like that sparkling wine, carries one out of one's self. I don't know whether his family was rich or poor, if he was sent to college, or allowed to educate himself.

But what is certain is, that at twenty-seven his independence is amazingly self-assertive. He counts on himself alone, expects nothing from any one, is never surprised, believes nothing impossible, never recedes, but triumphs over all obstacles. If he falls, he gets up again ; begins again if he fails ; never stops, never loses courage, and goes straight ahead, looking neither to the right nor to the left. He has been a planter, a school-master, a lawyer, a journalist, a gold-digger, a labourer, and a tradesman. He has seen everything, read everything, done everything, and has

travelled half the globe over. When I made his acquaintance at the Piræus, he commanded a steam-launch, which mounted four guns and had a crew of sixty men. He was the Eastern correspondent of the *Boston Review*; did business with an indigo house in Calcutta, but nevertheless found time to come and dine three or four days a week with his nephew and the rest of our company.

One anecdote in a thousand will suffice to illustrate his character. In 1853 he was partner in a Philadelphia firm. His nephew, then seventeen, went to see him. He found him standing, with his hands in his pockets, before a burning house in Washington Square. William tapped him on the shoulder. He turned round.

"Oh!" said he, "it's you? Couldn't have come at a worse moment. That fire there is just ruining me. I had 40,000 dollars in the house, and shan't save a stiver."

"What will you do?" said the youth.

"Do? Why, it's eleven o'clock. I'm hungry. I've still a few coppers in my pocket, so let's go and have some breakfast!"

Harris is one of the best built, and most elegant men I ever saw. He is thoroughly manly, with a high forehead, and a clear, searching eye.

Those Americans are never weak or deformed ; do you know why ? They are not crippled by the swaddling-clothes of a narrow civilization. Their minds and bodies develop at leisure ; their school is the open air ; their master, exercise ; their nurse, Liberty.

I never thought much of M. Mérinay ; and examined Fondi with the indifferent curiosity I feel for the beasts in a menagerie. I cared little for Lobster, but had a sincere friendship for Harris. His frank face and simple manners, his good-tempered *brusquerie*, violent yet chivalrous disposition, his eccentricities, and the vivacity of his feelings all drew me towards him by their force of contrast. We appreciate in others what we do not find in ourselves. Giacomo wore white because he was black, and I adore Americans because I am German. As for the Greeks, I knew but little of them, having spent only four months in their country. Nothing is easier than to live in Athens without coming across its natives. I did not go to the *cafés*, and I read neither the *Mandora*, the *Minerva*, nor any other local paper. Still less did I frequent the theatres, because my ear is so delicate that I dread a false note more than a blow. I lived quietly at home with my hosts, my herbarium, and John Harris. I might

have been introduced at the Palace, in virtue of my official title and diplomatic passport. My card had been left at the house of the Master of Ceremonies, and at that of the Grand Mistress, so that I was sure of an invitation to the first Court Ball. I was keeping in reserve for this occasion a fine red coat embroidered in silver, which my aunt Rosenthaler had brought me the evening before I left home. It was the uniform of her departed husband, who had been Professor of Natural History at the Philomathic Institute of Minden. My dear old aunt, a clever woman, knew that a uniform is well received everywhere, and especially when it is red. My eldest brother had said on seeing me wear it that I was a bigger man than the uncle, as the sleeves of his coat stopped far short of my wrists. But father answered quickly that "all would be dazzled by the silver embroidery, and that Princesses paid no attention to such trifling details as 'fit.'"

Unfortunately, there were no Court Balls that season, and consequently there were only rural recreations to fall back upon, such as the pleasant spectacle of the blossoming of the almond, peach, and citron trees. A possible Court Ball for March 15 was vaguely hinted at about the town, and believed in as a probability by some sanguine

semi-official papers; but nothing was less certain. My studies, like my pleasures, were unambitious. There was not much of interest to be obtained at the Botanical Gardens, which were not particularly large nor rich in specimens. The Royal Garden, however, afforded me a better scope for my studies. An intelligent Frenchman had selected for it all that was worthy of note to be found in the country, from the palms of the Isles to the saxifrages of Cape Sunium. Many a happy day did I pass in M. Bareaud's plantations. This garden is only open to the public at certain hours, but I bribed the sentinels by talking Greek to them, and they made no objection to my entrance at any time. M. Bareaud also was pleased to see me. He took me all over the place for the sake of improving his botany and German with me. When he was not there I formed the acquaintance of a gardener with bright red hair, and questioned him in German. After all, there is an advantage in being even a moderate polyglot.

Every day I botanized a little in the country, but dared not go as far as I would have liked. Athens was surrounded by brigands. I'm not a coward, as the sequel of this tale will prove, but consider my life precious—at least to myself. I value existence. It is a gift from my parents,

and for their sakes I wish to preserve it as long as possible.

In April, 1856, it was dangerous to go outside the town, and not particularly safe either to remain within its walls. I never ventured so far as the slope of Lycabetos without thinking of poor Madame Durand, who was robbed there in full mid-day. The hills of Daphnæ reminded me of the well-known captivity and adventures of two French officers. On the road to the Piræus I remembered, in spite of myself, the band of robbers who went about, somewhat after the fashion of a wedding-party, in six coaches, from the windows of which they fired on the passers-by. When I turned towards Pentelicos my imagination dwelt on the abduction of the Duchess of Placentia, or the more recent adventures of Messrs. Harris and Lobster. On returning from a ride on two Persian horses belonging to Harris, these gentlemen fell into an ambuscade. Two brigands, pistols in hand, stopped them in the middle of a bridge. They cast a furtive glance round, and lo and behold! perceived that the ravine below them was full of armed rascals mounting guard over fifty or sixty captives. All who had passed that way since sunrise had been robbed, and then bound so as to prevent the possibility of giving

the alarm. Harris and his nephew were without arms. He said to him in English: "Let's give up our cash. It's not worth while losing one's life for the sake of a few dollars." The brigands picked up the money without releasing the reins, and pointing to the ravine signified that they were to go down there. That was the last straw, and Harris lost his temper. He hated being bound, and is not an easy man to deal with. He looked at Lobster, and forthwith two well-directed blows sent the brigands sprawling. The fellow who had attacked William, in falling, fired off his pistol; the other, more rudely served, toppled over the bridge among his companions. Meanwhile Harris and Lobster, mercilessly spurring their poor beasts, were already far away. The band as with one accord now fired upon them and killed their horses. The couple were, however, able to get clear of the gang, and taking to their heels warned the carabineers, who waited two days before they opened pursuit. Christodulos was much cut up when told of the death of the horses, but did not in the least blame the thieves. "What else could you expect?" said he with delightful simplicity. "It's their trade."

Almost all Greeks think like our host. Not because the brigands spare their countrymen and

attack foreigners. No! but a Greek robbed by one of his own people consoles himself with the reflection that the money does not go out of the family. The natives allow themselves to be ransomed by the brigands as cheerfully as a woman of the people acknowledges the strength of the husband who beats her. Local moralists deplore the excesses committed in the country very much as a fond father does the wild frolics of a son. He is scolded publicly, and petted in private.

This is so perfectly true, that when I arrived there the hero of Athens was the scourge of Attica. In the *cafés* and other public resorts, in the barbers' shops frequented by the working classes, at the chemists' where respectable tradesmen assemble, in the muddy streets of the Bazaar, at the theatres, round the band, and on the Pâtissia road, nothing was spoken of but the great Hadji Stavros. Every one swore by Hadji Stavros; the invincible Hadji Stavros; Hadji Stavros, the terror of the carabineers; Hadji Stavros, the King of the Mountains! I assure you, a little more, and litanies would have been sung in his honour!

One Sunday, a short time after his adventure, John Harris dined with us, and I started Christodulos on the chapter of Hadji Stavros. Our host had at one time seen a great deal of him. They

had been intimate during the War of Independence, when brigandage was thought much less of than it is now.

He emptied his glass of Santorinos, smoothed his grey moustache, and began a long story interrupted by sighs. It seems that Stavros was the son of a pope or priest of the island of Tinos. God knows when he was born! Greeks of the good old time don't know their age. Civil registers belong to the decadence. His father, who destined him for the Church, taught him to read. At twenty he went to Jerusalem, and tacked on to his name the title of Hadji, which means—a pilgrim. When on his way back to his home, he was seized by a pirate. His captor discovered possibilities in the youth, and turned him into a sailor. Thus he learned to fight against Turkish ships, and one might add against all vessels that were not armed. At the end of a few years he grew tired of serving a master, and determined to set up for himself. He had no ship, and no money to buy one, and thus was forced to turn land pirate. An excellent opportunity offered itself in the rising of Greece against Turkey. He never knew exactly whether he was a brigand or an insurgent, whether his men were thieves or patriots. No doubt his hatred of the Turks was

great, but it did not blind him to the advantages to be derived from pillaging a Greek village. All was fish that came into his net, let the owner be friend or foe. A simple theft or a glorious raid was equally welcome. This wise impartiality rapidly increased his fortune. Shepherds on learning that they had a chance with him of getting as much gold as glory, flocked under his lead, and thus it came to pass that, thanks to his reputation, he soon had an army at his command.

The Powers that were favourable to the insurrection heard only the heroic side of his exploits, and at that time indulgence was the fashion. Lord Byron dedicated an ode to him. Parisian poets and rhymsters compared him to Epaminondas, and even to poor Aristides. Flags were embroidered in his honour in the Faubourg St. Germain; and the more important question of finance had its turn. He received money from France, England, and Russia. I wouldn't like to swear that he didn't get even some from Turkey: in a word, he was a true Palikar! At the end of the war he was, with the other chiefs, besieged in the Acropolis at Athens. They lodged at the Propylleum, between Margarites and Lygandas, and each of them kept his booty at the head of

his bed. One summer's night the roof of the house conveniently fell in and crushed them all except Hadji, who was smoking his pipe in the open air. Naturally he took possession of all his comrades' goods and chattels, and received the congratulations of his friends in consequence. But an unforeseen misfortune checked his successful career: peace was declared. Hadji Stavros, while enjoying his money in the country, witnessed a very strange spectacle.

The Powers that had freed Greece sought also to convert the redeemed Peninsula into a kingdom. The unwelcome words, government, army, public order, reached the ears of the old Palikar. When told that his lands were included in a certain divisional region he burst out laughing. But when the collector called for the yearly taxes, he found the report other than a joke. He forthwith turned that official out of the house after relieving him of all the money in his possession. A prosecution followed. To avoid further trouble, with the best grace in the world, for in his eyes the only advantage of a roof was that he could sleep on the top of it in the hot weather, he took to the mountains.

His old comrades were dispersed about the kingdom. The Government had given them land,

which they reluctantly cultivated, for they at least had no liking for bread earned by sweat of brow. As soon as they heard that their chief was at odds with the law, they sold all their land and joined him, while the more prudent Hadji only "let" what belonged to him.

Peace and idleness had injured his health. The pure mountain air set him up again, and, in 1840, he decided to marry. True, he was past fifty, but half a century doesn't count with men of his stamp; even death seems to pass them by. He married a rich heiress belonging to one of the best families of Laconia, and thus became connected with some of the first people in the kingdom. After having borne him a daughter, his wife, who had followed him in his wanderings, fell a victim to malaria and died. He brought up his child himself with quite maternal care, and when he danced it on his knees, one easily could see that the rough old fellow was a born nurse. Paternal love inspired him with new ideas. In order to amass a right royal dower for his daughter he studied finance, a science concerning which he had hitherto possessed the most rudimentary notions. Instead of hiding, as heretofore, his money in old coffers, he invested it, learned the tricks of speculation, and followed the

movements of the public funds in Greece and abroad. It is even said that he wanted to form brigandage into a company, and float the shares. He travelled a good deal in Europe with a Greek from Marseilles, who acted as his interpreter.

During his stay in England he was witness of an election in some rather close Yorkshire borough. This made him reflect seriously on the advantages of a constitutional government. On his return to Greece he determined to turn the institutions of his country to his own advantage. To serve the Opposition he burnt a number of villages: then to satisfy the Conservatives destroyed a few more. If a ministry was to be upset, the best thing to do was to ask his assistance. He would prove in the most irrefutable manner that the police was worthless, and that there was no chance of security unless the Cabinet were changed. On the other hand, he punished severely the enemies of order, and obliged them to expiate their sins. In short, his political talents were so highly esteemed that all parties sought his alliance. His advice was almost always followed in electoral affairs, with the result that instead of the principles of the representative government being maintained, which decrees that one member

should be the mouthpiece of a number of men, he was represented by some thirty or so, entirely devoted to him.

An intelligent Minister, the celebrated Bhalettis, seeing that a man who was constantly interfering with the working of the official machine might eventually put it out of order, tried to bribe him. A meeting was arranged at the country house of a foreign Consul at Carvati between Hymettos and Pentelicos. Hadji Stavros came without an escort, and unarmed. The Minister and the brigand, who were old acquaintances, breakfasted in the most friendly manner together. At dessert, Bhalettis offered him a full and free pardon for himself and his men, the rank of Lieutenant-General, the title of Senator, and 10,000 hectares of forest as a freehold. The Palikar hesitated for some time, and then said: "No; twenty years ago I should perhaps have accepted. Now, I am too old. I can't, at my age, change my mode of life. The dust of Athens would choke me. I should go to sleep during the sittings of the Senate; and if you gave me soldiers to command, by sheer force of habit I should shoot them. No, let me go my own way, and go you yours."

Bhalettis did not take him at his word. He tried to make him see the infamy of the trade he

was pursuing. Hadji merely laughed, and asked simply enough :

" Old comrade, if we were each to make a list of our sins, which would be the longer of the two ? "

" But reflect," urged the Minister, evading the answer, " that you will not escape fate, and will one day die by a violent death ! "

" Allah Perim ! God is great ! " answered the other in Turkish. " Neither you nor I have read the stars. But I have the advantage. My enemies wear uniforms, and I can see them at a distance, whereas you are not so lucky. Adieu, brother."

Six months later the Minister was murdered by his political enemies—the brigand still lived.

Our host did not tell us all he knew about his hero—the day would not have been long enough for that—but he told us some remarkable things. I don't think that in any country the rivals of Hadji Stavros have ever done anything more artistic than the looting of the *Niebuhr*, an Austrian Lloyd's steamer that the Palikar pillaged on land. The *Niebuhr* came from Constantinople. She discharged her cargo and passengers at Kalamaki, to the east of the Isthmus of Corinth. Four wagons and two omnibuses were loaded up with passen-

gers and merchandise to take them to the small port of Loutrakis, on the opposite side of the Isthmus, where another boat awaited them. It waited long. Hadji Stavros, in full daylight, on a good road, flat, and destitute of trees, carried off the merchandise, the luggage, the travellers' money, and the ammunition of the carabineers of the escort: a stroke which brought him in ten thousand pounds—here Christodulos sighed with more than a shade of envy and regret.

Much has been said of the cruelty of Hadji Stavros. Our host declared that he did not do evil for evil's sake. "He is essentially a sober man, who never loses his head," he continued with rising enthusiasm. "If he does warm the soles of a peasant, it is because the man has persistently refused to tell him where he keeps his money. Generally he treats prisoners well whom he expects will be ransomed. In the summer of 1854, he went with his band to the house of a Mr. Voïdi, a rich merchant of the island of Eubœa. He found the family assembled, and in their company an old Judge from Chalkis, who was playing cards with the host. Hadji offered to play with the Judge, the stake being the latter's liberty. His Honour consented, lost, and had to accept his fate with the best grace at his command. The

brigand carried off Voïdi, his son and daughter, but left the wife behind, in order that she might occupy her leisure in procuring the ransom of the rest of her family. When they were captured, the merchant was suffering from gout, the girl had fever, and the boy was a pale, puffy-looking thing. Two months later they returned home, entirely cured, thanks to regular exercise, a life in the open air, and the kind treatment that they had met with. After all, you must allow that two thousand pounds was not an exorbitant price to pay for the recovered health of an entire family !

" I must admit," said Christodulos, " that our friend is pitiless with bad payers. If a ransom is not forthcoming when it falls due, he kills his prisoners with commercial punctuality : that's his way of protesting notes. In spite of my admiration for him, and the friendship between our families, I never have forgiven him the murder of the two little girls of Mistra. They were twins of fourteen, beautiful as Venus, and betrothed to two young men of Leondari. They were so much alike that it was impossible to tell one from the other. Hadji spied them one morning as they were going to sell cocoons at the factory, carrying a large basket between them, and running along the road as lightly as if they had

wings, and carried them off to the mountains. He wrote to their mother, telling her that he would restore them to her for four hundred pounds, payable at the end of the month. The mother was a widow in easy circumstances. She had a fine plantation of mulberry-trees, but like the rest of us she had very little ready cash. She raised a loan on her property, not an easy thing to do in these parts even at twenty per cent. With all her endeavours the transaction took more than six weeks. As soon as she had collected the money, she hired a mule and loaded it with the silver tied up in sacks, and started off on foot for Hadji's camp. But on arriving at the big 'langada' valley of the Taygetos, at the spot where there are seven fountains under a plane-tree, the beast stopped short and refused to budge. To her horror the poor mother saw her two little girls lying on the road. Their throats had been cut to the backbone, and their pretty heads were almost severed from their bodies. Overwhelmed with despair she placed their bleeding bodies as best she could on the mule, and took them back to Mistra. The poor soul did not shed a tear. She went mad and died soon afterward. I know that Hadji Stavros has regretted this crime : he thought the widow richer

than she was and unwilling to pay. The two children had been killed by way of an example. It is quite certain that since that time, debts owing to him are regularly paid : no one dares to keep him waiting."

"Brutta carogna!" (vile beast!) cried Giacomo, giving the table a blow that shook the house. "If ever he falls into my hands, he'll get ten thousand blows, which will allow him to retire from business."

"As for me," said little Lobster with a quiet smile, "I should like to cover him at fifty paces with my revolver. And you, Uncle John?"

Harris whistled between his teeth an American tune, which seemed to cut through the air like a dagger's point.

"Can I believe my ears?" cried good M. Mérinay, in his shrillest tone. "Can such horrors be possible in our time? I know that 'The Society for the Moralization of Criminals' has no branches in this country; but meanwhile have you no mounted police?"

"Certainly," replied our host. "It is composed of 50 officers, 152 brigadiers, and 1250 carabineers, of whom 150 are mounted. It's the best troop in the kingdom after that under the command of Hadji."

"What surprises me," said I, "is that the rascal's daughter did not interfere."

"She was not with him."

"Ah! now I understand! Where is she?"

"At school."

"In Athens?"

"Now you're asking me more than I can tell you. But the man who marries her will be a lucky fellow."

"Yes!" said Harris. "People say that Calcraft's daughter is not a bad match."

"Who's Calcraft?"

"The London hangman."

At these words, our host's son Dimitrius blushed up to his ears.

"Excuse me, sir," said he to John Harris. "There is a great difference between a hangman and a brigand. The trade of the one is infamous, that of the other honoured. Government is obliged to keep the executioner of Athens shut up in Fort Palamedes, or he would be lynched, while no one wishes harm to Hadji Stavros, and the most honest men in the country would be proud to shake hands with him."

Harris opened his lips to reply, when there came a ring at the shop-door. It was a servant,

who entered, accompanied by a young girl of about fifteen to sixteen, dressed in the latest Paris fashion.

Dimitrius rose, saying, "It's Photini!"

"Gentlemen," said the confectioner, "let us talk of something else if you please. Tales about brigands are not meant for young ladies' ears."

Christodulos introduced the girl to us as the daughter of one of his brother-officers, Colonel Jani, commandant of the town of Nauplia.

According to the custom of the country, surnames being rarely used, she was addressed as Photini, daughter of Jani. The young girl was plain, like nine-tenths of the Athenian maidens. Her teeth were white and even, and her hair abundant, but that was all. Her thick waist looked ill at ease in a Parisian corset. Her feet, rounded like a pair of smoothing-irons, dragged along ungracefully in wide slippers instead of being pinched into smart boots. Her type was so thoroughly un-Grecian that she had absolutely no profile—far from it, her face was as flat as if it had been sat upon in infancy by a careless nurse. Dress doesn't suit all women, and it made Photini look ridiculous. Her flounced gown, stretched over a big crinoline, displayed to disadvantage the ungainliness of her figure and awkwardness

of her gait. The Palais Royal trinkets with which she was bedecked seemed like so many dots of exclamation emphasizing her imperfections. One was reminded thereby of a common servant-girl dressed up in her mistress's clothes.

None of us was surprised to see the daughter of a simple colonel so richly dressed pass her Sunday in a confectioner's house. We knew the country well enough to be aware that the love of finery is one of the worst curses of Grecian society. Country girls have holes bored in silver coins, sew them together, and wear them in their caps on holidays. That is to say, they carry their marriage portions on their heads. Their town sisters spend their time and their pocket-money in the shops. Photini was at school at the Hetairia, which is to a certain extent an educational establishment modelled after the fashion of that of the "Légion d'Honneur," but boasts of more liberal and tolerant rules. Brigands' heiresses as well as soldiers' daughters are sometimes brought up there.

Colonel Jani's daughter knew a little French and English, but her shyness did not allow her to shine in conversation. I learned later that her family counted upon us to increase her familiarity with foreign languages. Her father, having heard

that Christodulos had some honest, even learned, foreign boarders, begged him to have her on Sundays, and to act towards her as his deputy. The bargain appeared to please our host, and still more his son. Young Dimitrius literally devoured with his eyes the school-girl, who, however, seemed unconscious of his admiration. We proposed to go together to hear the band. On Sundays, the parade there is quite one of the sights of Athens. The inhabitants, in full dress, assemble in a dusty field, to hear the military band play waltzes and quadrilles. The poor go on foot, the rich drive, the swells of the sterner sex ride on horseback. The Court invariably attends. It would not miss one of these occasions for an empire. When the echo of the last tune dies away, every one goes home, covered with dust, but happy. The worthy Athenians say to each other: "What a capital time we've had!"

Without doubt Photini intended to exhibit herself and her finery at the band, and the devoted Dimitrius was but too happy to attend her there, for he had on a brand-new frock coat, purchased ready-made at the dépôt of the "Belle-Jardinière." At the last moment it unfortunately began to pour with rain, so we were all obliged to stay at home. Maroula proposed to play for sweets, a

game much in favour with the Athenian middle class. She brought a large bottle of sweeties out of the shop-window and gave each of us a handful of bull's-eyes flavoured with cloves, aniseed, chicory, and so on. Thereupon cards were dealt out, and he who got nine of the same colour was paid three sweets by each of the other players. Giacomo's earnest attention to the game showed that its profits were not indifferent to him. Chance was in his favour. He swept the table, and we saw him swallow seven or eight heaps of sweets, which had passed from one hand to another, including those of M. Mérinay. I, being less interested in the sport, perceived a side game in progress at my left. While the ardent glances of Dimitrius fell harmlessly, shattered by Photini's indifference, she seemed irresistibly attracted by Harris. He held his cards carelessly, yawned now and again with American candour, or, utterly ignoring the others, whistled a few bars of "Yankee Doodle."

I believe that he had been impressed by our host's story, and that his mind was in the mountains with Hadji Stavros. At any rate, whatever might have been his thoughts, they evidently had nothing to do with love. Neither perhaps had those of the young girl, for Greek women are

reputed to be unusually indifferent to matters of the heart. Nevertheless Photini was manifestly as much attracted by our new friend Harris as they say is a lark by a piece of looking-glass: she devoured him with her eyes, and never ceased staring at him the whole time the game lasted.

She had not, however, heard him utter a word, and even if she had, she was quite incapable of knowing whether he was clever or the reverse. But she saw that he was handsome, and that sufficed. The Greeks of old adored beauty; the Greek of to-day, and in spite of his actual decadence, knows perfectly well how to distinguish an Apollo from a baboon. A song in M. Fauriel's collection is eloquent on this head.

It continued to rain in torrents, and Dimitrius passed his time in gazing at the girl, and she in adoring Harris. Giacomo sucked his sweets, and Mérinay wearied Lobster to death with an interminable story to which he gave but half hearing. At eight, Maroula laid the table for supper. Photini was placed between Dimitrius and my insignificant self. She spoke little, and ate nothing. At dessert, when the servant talked of her going back to school, she made an effort, and whispered in my ear, "Is Mr. Harris married?"

To tease her a bit I answered: "Yes, he married the widow of the Doge of Venice."

"Is it possible! How old is she?"

"As old and everlasting as the world."

"Don't laugh at me, please. I am but an ignorant girl, and do not understand your foreign jokes."

"In other words, young lady, his spouse is the sea, for he commands the American stationary, the *Fancy*."

She thanked me by a really radiant look; so great was her joy that it lighted up her otherwise unusually plain face, and lent it for a moment an expression that I thought was almost beautiful.

CHAPTER III

MARY-ANN

My youthful studies have developed in me at least one passion that has absorbed all others—curiosity. Until the day I set out for Athens my greatest glory in life was to learn; and my greatest sorrow to be obliged to acknowledge myself an ignoramus. I loved science as a man does his mistress, and hitherto nothing had disputed her place in my heart. On the other hand, I had but little sensibility, and sentiment rarely troubled me.

I went about the world with a magnifying-glass, as though the said world were a colossal museum. The pleasures and sufferings of others seemed to me worthy of study, but unworthy either of envy or pity.

I could no more feel jealous of a happy married couple than of a pair of palm-trees growing side by side; and I had just as much compassion for a broken heart as for a geranium shrivelled by the

frost. One is not easily shocked if one ever has vivisected a rat, and I frankly own that I should have thoroughly enjoyed a combat of gladiators. The love of Photini for John Harris would have excited pity in any one else but a naturalist. To use Henri IV's expression, the poor creature "loved at random," and it was pretty evident that her love never would be requited. She was too timid to express it; John, too careless to divine its existence. Even if he had suspected the true state of her heart, how could so ugly a creature excite the slightest emotion in so handsome a man? Photini passed all the four Sundays of April with us. She gazed adoringly at Harris from morning to night with languishing, longing eyes, but never found courage to open her lips in his presence. Harris whistled quietly, Dimitrius growled like a whipped puppy, and I smiled at these queer manifestations of a malady from which my constitution had hitherto preserved me.

About this time my father wrote to say that business was going to the dogs, that travellers were rare and provisions dear; also that our opposite neighbours had emigrated, and that if I had found a Russian Princess, I would better marry her there and then.

I answered that I had had no success, met

with no possible conquest, except indeed the daughter of a poor Grecian colonel, who was madly in love, but not with me, and that I might perhaps with a little tact become her confidant, but never her husband. But, I added that I was fortunate enough to be in good health, and my herbal full of fine specimens. That hitherto I had only been able to make excursions in the outskirts of Athens, but that soon I hoped to be able to go further afield. Security was returning, the brigands had been beaten by the carabineers, and all the papers announced the disruption of Hadji Stavros's band. In a month, at latest, I should be able to set out for Germany, and solicit a place that would keep the whole family in clover.

On Sunday, April 28, we read in the *Century* of Athens, of the absolute defeat of the King of the Mountains. The official reports said that twenty of his men had been disabled, his camp burned, his band dispersed, and himself driven into the marshes round Marathon. This news, however good it might be for foreigners, appeared less welcome to the Greeks, and especially to our hosts. Lieutenant of his regiment though he might be, Christodulos was singularly lacking in enthusiasm on this score, and as for Colonel Jani's daughter, she had some difficulty in restraining

her tears when she heard of the brigands' misfortune. Harris, who had brought us the paper, did not conceal his joy. As for me, since this news evidently cleared the coast for me to roam where I pleased, I was naturally enough enchanted at the defeat of Stavros and his friends. On the morning of the 30th I was awakened by Dimitrius at four. I set out with my tin-case and my walking-stick for a good long ramble. Good luck had just befallen that youth. He was soon to enter the service of an English family newly arrived in Athens and then staying at the Hôtel des Étrangers.

I sauntered down Hermes Street as far as the crossway popularly known in the foreign colony as "la belle Grèce." In crossing Cannon Square I did not neglect to salute the small artillery of the kingdom, which reposes quietly under a shed, awaiting the taking of Constantinople, and in four strides I arrived at the Pâtissia walk. The melia shrubs that bordered it on both sides were just beginning to open their sweet-scented flowers. The sky was of a vivid blue, softening into a paler shade towards Hymettos and Pentelicos. Before me, in the distance, rose, like a crenelated wall, the summit of Parnassus, which was the object of my journey. I descended by a cross

road to the house of Countess Jantha Théotoki, now occupied by the French Legation; skirted the gardens of Prince Michael Sutzo, and entered the olive woods beyond.

The thrushes and blackbirds sang joyously in the boughs over my head, and the silvery leaves of the olives glistened in the morning light. On leaving the woods I crossed great fields of green barley, in which Athenian horses, as short and broad-chested as those on the frieze of the Parthenon, were recouping themselves for the dry hay and heating food of the past winter. Flocks of doves rose at my approach, and the tufted larks darted straight up to heaven like so many sky-rockets. From time to time a lazy tortoise, dragging his house on his shoulders, crossed the road. I put the creature carefully on his back, and left him to get out of that, to him, rather awkward posture as best he could. After walking for two hours I at length reached the desert. All trace of culture now disappeared. Nothing was to be seen but tufts of thin grass, bulbs of the Star of Bethlehem, or long dried stalks of the asphodel. The sun rose higher, and I could now distinguish the fir-trees on the flanks of Mount Parnassus. The path that I had taken might not be the right one, but I directed my steps towards the scattered

houses on the mountain-side that probably formed part of the village of Castia.

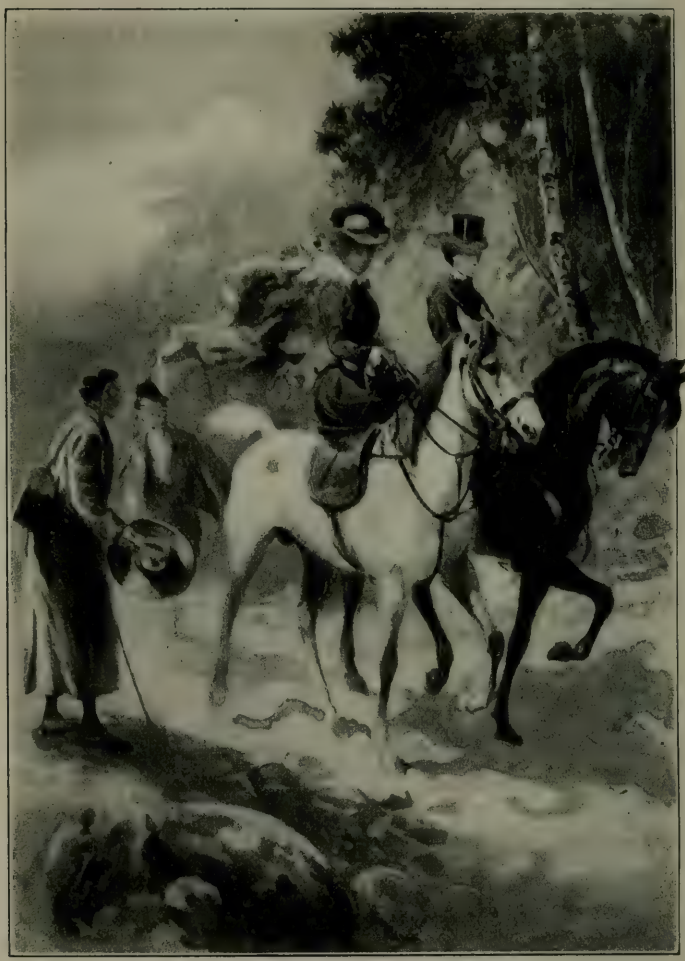
With one bound I crossed the Eleusinian Cephisus, to the consternation of the small flat tortoises that disported themselves in the water like frogs. Some steps further on, the path disappeared in a wide deep ravine ravaged by the rains of two or three thousand winters. I supposed, and rightly, that the ravine was near the road, since I had remarked in my previous excursions that the Greeks did not take the trouble to trace a road, if a water-course had been good enough to engineer the matter for them. In this country, where man leaves Nature much to herself, torrents are high-roads, streams districts, and ditches parish boundaries. Stones do the business of civil engineers, and rain becomes a road-surveyor, which, on its own responsibility, keeps small and big paths in order. I dived into the ravine and continued my route between two steep banks, which hid from my sight the plain, the mountain, and the object of my excursion. But the path had so many windings that it became difficult to know in which direction I was going, and whether I was not turning my back on Parnassus. It would have been wiser to have climbed the banks, and found out where I really was. But they were

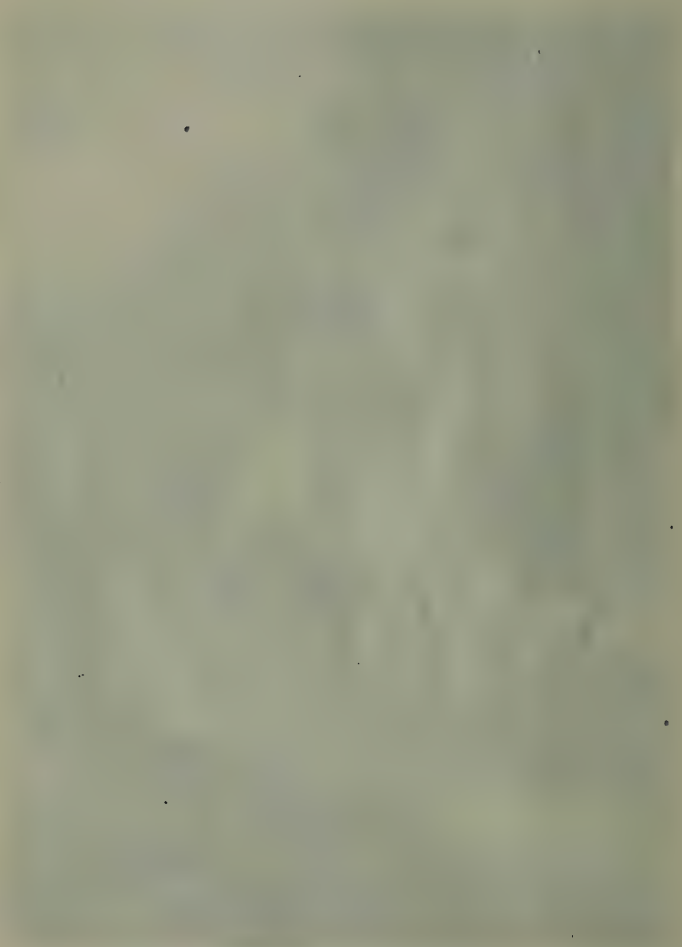
steep; I was tired, hungry, and very comfortable in the shade. So I sat down on a marble boulder, took some bread and a cold shoulder of lamb out of my knapsack, also a flask of that glorious wine of which I have already spoken.

"Well," said I to myself, "I'm on the road-side. Some one will pass, and I'll ask him to put me on the right path!"

And some one did pass. Just as I was putting my knife back into my pocket, meaning to lie down in the shade and enjoy the delightful rest-fulness that follows the breakfast of travellers and anacondas, I fancied that I heard the sound of horses' hoofs. I put my ear to the ground, and perceived that two or three horsemen were coming behind me. I strapped my box on my back and prepared to follow them, in case they were going towards Parnassus. Five minutes later, two ladies mounted on hired horses came in sight. They were dressed like travelling Englishwomen all the world over. Behind them was a man on foot, whom I easily recognized to be none other than Dimitrius.

You who have knocked about the world must know how indifferent to his personal appearance a traveller becomes when alone or in the company of men, but that if he meets with ladies, even if more elderly than Noah's dove, he quickly changes





I DOFFED MY HAT POLITELY TO THE LADIES

front, and becomes anxious as to the cut of his garments. Before I was able to see the faces the two Amazons concealed behind their blue gauze veils, I passed my person in review and was tolerably satisfied. I was wearing the clothes you see, which are still presentable even after two years' wear and tear. I have only changed my headgear. Even so good and useful a cap as this could not have protected me from the rays of the sun. So I wore a large grey felt with wide brims, but alas! covered with dust.

I doffed it politely to the ladies, who took very little notice of me, so I proceeded to shake hands with Dimitrius, and in a moment he told me all I wanted to learn.

"Am I on the right road to Parnassus?"

"Yes; we are going there."

"I might go with you."

"Why not?"

"Who are these ladies?"

"The Englishwomen in whose employ I am. Milord has remained at the hotel."

"What sort of people are they?"

"Oh, not much to speak of. London bankers. The old lady is Mrs. Simons, of the firm of Barclay and Co. The Milord is her brother, and the girl her daughter."

"Pretty?"

"That depends on taste; I prefer Photini."

"Shall you go as far as Fort Pileos?"

"Yes; they have engaged me for a week, at ten francs a day, everything included. I arrange the excursions, and chose this one because I knew I should meet you. But what's the matter with them now?"

The old lady, seeing that I had taken possession of her servant, in her vexation put her horse to a trot in a place where never horse had trotted before. The other animal, not to be outdone, adopted the same pace, and if we had talked a little longer we should have been left behind. Dimitrius ran on to rejoin the ladies, and I heard Mrs. Simons say to him in English:

"Don't go away like that. I'm English, and mean to be properly served. I don't pay you to gossip with your friends. Who is this Greek you were talking to?"

"He's a German, madam."

"Ah! What does he do?"

"He looks for herbs."

"So he is an apothecary?"

"No, madam, a learned Professor."

"Ah! does he speak English?"

"Very well indeed, madam."

"Ah!"

The three "Ahs!" of the old lady were pronounced in such different keys, that if I had been a musician I should have liked to have written them down. Their various modulations showed the progress I had made in Mrs. Simons's esteem. Nevertheless she did not address me, and I followed the small troop at a certain distance. Dimitrius did not venture to speak to me again, and walked on in front like a prisoner of war. All he dared do was to give me a look from time to time, which seemed to say, "What affected jades these Englishwomen are!"

Miss Simons did not turn her head, and I could not make out whether she was more or less ugly than Photini. What I could see, however, was that she was tall and had a splendid figure. Her shoulders were wide, the waist round and supple. The little that I saw of her neck would have reminded me of the swans of the Zoological Garden even if I had not been a naturalist.

Her mother turned to speak to her, and I pressed forward to hear her voice. Didn't I tell you that I'm fearfully curious? I just arrived in time to catch the following sentences.

"Mary-Ann!"

"Mother!"

"I'm hungry."

"Are you?"

"Yes!"

"And I'm very warm."

"Are you?"

"Yes!"

You think perhaps that this particularly British dialogue made me smile? Not in the least, my dear sir, I was already under the charm. Mary-Ann's voice, I don't know how or why, went straight to my heart, troubling me, yet at the same time filling me with delight. In my whole life I never had heard anything so youthful, fresh, and pure as that voice. I am perfectly certain that the sound of a shower of gold falling on my father's roof would have sounded less harmoniously. "What a misfortune," thought I, "that the ugliest birds should have the sweetest notes!" And I dared not look at her, yet would have given the world to see her face!

Dimitrius intended that the travellers should breakfast at the inn at Calyvia, a barrack made of boards badly put together, but where in all seasons one was sure of getting a skin of good wine, a bottle of "rhaki," or aniseed, and a number of venerable hens, which, in virtue of the system of metempsychosis, death obligingly changed into

young chickens. Unhappily, the place was empty, and the door locked.

On learning this, Mrs. Simons flew into a fury with Dimitrius, and as she turned round I saw a hatchet-shaped face with two rows of enormous teeth. "I'm English," cried she, "and intend to eat when I'm hungry."

"Madam," said Dimitrius, ruefully, "you will breakfast in half-an-hour at Castia."

I, who had breakfasted, made melancholy reflections on Mrs. Simons's ugliness, and whispered to myself the old aphorism, "Like mother, like daughter": "Qualis mater, talis filia."

Between the inn and the village the road was detestable. It consisted of a path between a perpendicular rock and a precipice that would have made a chamois giddy. Before going farther on this diabolical road, where the horses had but just room to place their feet, Mrs. Simons asked if there was not another one. "I'm English," said she, "and was not made to roll down precipices."

Dimitrius praised the road, and declared that there were others in the country a hundred times worse.

"At least," said the old lady, "hold the bridle of my horse. But no! what will become of my daughter? Yet I don't want to break my neck.

Can't you hold the two bridles? The road is vile! —good enough for Greeks possibly, but certainly not for Englishwomen! Don't you think so, sir?" added she, turning in my direction.

Here was my introduction! Regular or not, it had taken place. I made my entry under the potent auspices of the magician, Danger, and bowing with all the elegance of which I was capable, I said in English:

"Madam, the road is not quite so bad as it looks. Your horses, I know, are sure-footed, because I have ridden them. And if you will permit it, you have two guides: Dimitrius for you, and myself for your daughter."

Instantly, without waiting for an answer, I boldly advanced, caught the bridle of Mary-Ann's horse, and, as she turned towards me, her blue veil blew back, and I saw the most adorable face that ever turned the head of a German naturalist.

A charming Chinese poet, the celebrated A-Scholl, says that every man has in his heart a string of eggs, each containing the germ of a love. The look of a woman suffices to open them. I know too much not to be aware that this hypothesis has no solid foundation, and that it is in formal contradiction with anatomical fact. Neverthe-

less I must say that Miss Simons's first look filled my heart with emotion. I experienced a sensation new yet not painful. It seemed to me that something had given way in my breast. At the same moment the blood rushed violently through my veins, and the arteries of my temples throbbed so furiously that I could count their pulsations.

What eyes she had, my dear sir! I trust for the sake of your peace that you never shall meet with their like. They were not large enough to encroach upon the rest of the face; they were neither black nor blue, but of a peculiar shade rarely seen in a lifetime. It was a glowing, velvety brown found in Siberian granite and certain garden flowers. I can show you a scabious, and a variety of the rose-mallow that recall without doing justice to the marvellous colour of those eyes. If you ever have seen a forge at midnight you must have remarked the strange light that radiates from a red-hot plate of steel: that was the sort of light that shone from her eyes. As for their charm, no words can convey it. Mary-Ann's eyes were intelligent, innocent, dove-like; they had a bright vivacity, a freshness due to youth and health, and at times a touch of most seductive languor. All the knowledge of the woman, and the simplicity of the child, might be

read in them as in an open book, but if you ventured to study that book, it was sure before long to turn your head and dazzle your eyes—blind you! it was so bright and sunny. I declare to you, her gaze burned through and through me. As true as I am called Hermann, her smile would have ripened peaches on a south wall.

When I think that Dimitrius deliberately declared that my Mary-Ann was quite plain as compared to that hideous Photini, I feel, even now, so indignant with him that, believe me, I could choke him! Truly, love is a disease that blinds its victims! Therefore I, who, of course, never have lost either my heart or my reason, and look at everything with an unbiased eye, am certainly in a position to assure you that the world never has seen a woman to equal in loveliness Mary-Ann Simons. Would that I could paint her portrait for you even as she remains impressed upon the tablets of my memory! You could then be able to behold her long eyelashes, her gracefully-arched eyebrows, her little mouth, her teeth white as pearls, and above all her lovely, rosy, shell-tinted ears. By nature I am analytical and observant, so of course I have studied her beauty in all details. What struck me most about her was the transparency of her delicate skin. It was exactly like the velvety

bloom on the finest of peaches. I don't know whether you admire pale women or not, but of course if you do I will not venture to gainsay your taste if by chance you worship that sickly sort of so-called elegance that has been in fashion for some time past. As for me, I appreciate nothing so much as that joy of life, health. If ever I embrace the medical profession, I shall prove an invaluable family doctor, for, most certainly, I never shall fall in love with a patient. A pretty face full of health and strength gives me almost as much pleasure as the sight of a well-grown plant whose flowers bear no trace of the ravage of moth or caterpillar.

The first time I beheld Mary-Ann I was violently tempted to take her by the hand and say to her: "I am really grateful to you, my dear creature, for looking so well!"

I forgot to tell you that her features were irregular, and her profile not in the least classical. Pheidias would perhaps have refused to model her, but your Pradier would have gone down on his knees to beg of her to sit for him. I assure you, even at the risk of dispelling your illusions, that she had a dimple on the left cheek and none on the other, which of course is not symmetrical. Also, that her nose was neither straight nor aqui-

line, but slightly tip-tilted after the French fashion —*retroussé*. She was indeed most beautiful, as beautiful in her way as any Greek statue. After all, even Plato admits that there is no fixed type of beauty, and the Venus of Milo, who, two thousand years ago, was declared the most beautiful woman in the Archipelago, would, I fear, not be considered even pretty on the Boulevards or in a Parisian drawing-room. No dressmaker of the Place Vendôme, or milliner in the Rue de la Paix, could make her even passable. I am no sculptor; but if I were, and received an order to create an allegorical statue of the Nineteenth Century, I should certainly choose Mary-Ann with her dimples and her *retroussé* nose for my model of models.

I walked in silence by her side to the village of Castia. I cannot remember for the life of me what she said, I was so lost in admiration of her beauty. Her voice sounded so sweetly, that I listened to it without hearing what she said, just as at the Opera the music often prevents me from understanding the words. And yet each incident of this our first meeting is indelibly stamped upon my mind and heart. I have only to close my eyes, and fancy that I am again on the same spot, walking by the side of this charming girl. The

April sun shone gladsomely. Above and below us the scent from the resinous trees embalmed the air. The pines, the wild thyme and myrtle, sent up a pungent incense at Mary-Ann's feet. The nostrils of her saucy little nose seemed to expand, to inhale it, as her eyes—her lovely brown eyes—wandered joyously from one object to another.

On beholding her so pretty, so gay, so happy, I involuntarily thought of some wood-nymph just escaped from her tree. I imagine even now that I can see the very horse she rode. It was called Psare, and was a white horse hired from Zimmermann's riding-school. Her riding-habit was black, and fitted her supple figure like a glove. Mrs. Simons, on the other hand, wore a bottle-green costume of most extravagant cut, and moreover she sported a tall black silk hat, of that hideous chimney-pot shape, worn by men of fashion in London and Paris. Her lovely daughter's hat was of that singularly romantic shape that we see so often in the portraits of the heroines of the Fronde—a wide-brimmed, soft grey felt, with a long sweeping feather.

We found the village of Castia as completely deserted as the inn at Calyvia. Dimitrius was absolutely dumfounded. We dismounted near

the fountain before the church. I proceeded to knock at every door; but in vain. There was nobody at home anywhere! The priest was out, and so was the local magistrate. The authorities had evidently taken themselves off as well as the inhabitants. All the houses in the place were built alike, and consisted of four walls, a roof, and two openings, one serving as a door, the other as a window. Poor Dimitrius took the trouble of breaking open two or three doors and as many shutters to assure himself that the people had not gone to sleep. All this only served to free a half-starved cat forgotten by his master, and who bolted off like an arrow towards the woods. At this point Mrs. Simons's patience took flight also. "I'm English," cried she in an acidulated tone to Dimitrius, "and it's not safe to play monkey-tricks with me. I'll complain to the Legation. What! I hired you for an excursion in the hills, and you take *me* across precipices! I order you to bring provisions, and you make me run the risk of dying of starvation. We were to breakfast at the inn, and lo! it is deserted! I patiently follow you to this wretched village only to find all the inhabitants gone! There must be something wrong. I've travelled in Switzerland. Switzerland is a mountainous country, yet there I never wanted

for anything. I always breakfasted when I chose, and even had trout for breakfast if I wished for it—do you hear?"

Mary-Ann vainly endeavoured to reason with and calm her mother. Dimitrius explained that as the village people were almost all charcoal-burners, their work often took them to the mountains. At any rate, no time had been lost: it was not more than eight o'clock, and in ten minutes' walk they would find both an inhabited house and a breakfast.

"What house?" demanded Mrs. Simons.

"The convent farm. The monks of Pentelicos have large domains above Castia. They cultivate bees there. The good old man who is in charge of the farm has always wine, bread, honey, and fowls! He'll give us a breakfast."

"He will be out, like the rest."

"Even if he is, he never goes far. Swarming time is near, and he cannot leave his hives for long."

"Go and see about it. Heaven only knows I've travelled far enough this morning, and declare I will not ride my horse again until I've had a meal."

"Madam," said the patient guide, "you will have no need to do so. We can stall our beasts

by the fountain, as we shall reach the convent more quickly on foot."

Mary-Ann persuaded her mother. She herself longed to see the old man and his winged swarms. Dimitrius tied up the horses near the fountain, and placed on each bridle a heavy stone. The ladies lifted their habits, and our little troop entered on a path that was evidently a great favourite with the Castia goats, it was so exceedingly narrow and ill kept. All the green lizards warming themselves in the sun retired discreetly at our approach, not, however, without the accompaniment of a series of piercing screams from Mrs. Simons, who could not endure the sight of creeping reptiles. After screaming for a quarter of an hour, she appeared somewhat soothed by that unpleasing exercise, and especially by the sight of an open door and a human face. At last we stood in the presence of the "old man." The house was small and built of red brick, with five cupolas, and looked for all the world like a village mosque, but seen from a distance it appeared quite imposing. The fashion of the East is to be clean without and dirty within. Near this building, upon the ground, protected by a hillock covered with thyme, stood about a hundred straw hives arranged in a straight line. They reminded me of a Liliputian encamp-

ment. The king of this winged empire was a stout, good-natured youth of five-and-twenty. Whatever may be his age, a Greek monk is always called "an old man." He was dressed like a peasant, but his cap, instead of being red, was black. By this Dimitrius recognised him to be the monk we were in search of. The little man on perceiving us raised his arms to heaven, and seemed absolutely petrified with amazement.

"What a singular creature!" exclaimed Mrs. Simons. "What's the matter with him? One would think that he never had seen an Englishwoman before in his life."

Dimitrius kissed the monk's hand, and said with a curious mixture of respect and familiarity: "Give me your blessing, Father, and then kill two of your fattest fowls; you will be well paid for them."

"What on earth have you come here for?" asked the monk.

"Why, to get some breakfast."

"But, you idiot, did you not see that the inn down below was shut up?"

"Rather! And not a sign of life could we find!"

"And that the village was deserted?"

"If there had been any one in it, I wouldn't have climbed up here!"

"You are then in league with them?"

"With *them?* What do you mean?"

"Why, with the brigands!"

"There are brigands on Parnassus? Since when?"

"Since the day before yesterday."

"Where are they?"

"Everywhere."

On this the guide without more ado ran towards us, exclaiming excitedly: "We have not a minute to lose, the brigands are in the neighbourhood. Let us run to our horses. Courage, ladies! To horse! to horse!"

"Ah! this is too much," cried Mrs. Simons: "to horse indeed, and without breakfast!"

"Madam, your breakfast might cost you too dear. For God's sake, be quick!"

"Why, 'tis a conspiracy, neither more nor less; you've sworn to starve me!—and now you are in league with the brigands! As if there were any: I don't believe in them. All the papers say that there are none; besides, I am English, and if any one dared to touch a hair of my head——"

Mary-Ann was less reassured. She leaned on my arm and asked me if I thought we were in danger of death.

"Of death?—no: of being robbed?—yes!"

"What do I care," cried Mrs. Simons; "let them take all I have on me, but give me my breakfast."

I learned only later that the poor woman was suffering from what the vulgar call rabid hunger, and the scientists "boulimia," in which state she would have given her fortune for a dish of lentils.

Dimitrius and Mary-Ann took hold of her each by a hand and dragged her to the path by which we had ascended. The little monk, gesticulating wildly, followed, and I was violently inclined to push her from behind, when suddenly a sharp and imperative whistle stopped us short.

"Hist! hist!"

I raised my eyes. Bushes of arbutus and mastic grew close on both sides of the path. From every branch projected three or four gun-barrels. A voice cried out in Greek, "Sit down on the ground." I was all the more disposed to obey this command, seeing that I felt my legs giving way under me. The barrels of the guns were pointed directly at us. It seemed to me that they lengthened visibly, and that the muzzles would finish by meeting above our heads. I was not afraid, but it was the first time I had observed the excessive length of the Greek gun. The entire arsenal with one accord came out on the path,

making a formidable array of pole-like guns and ferocious-looking brigands.

The only difference that exists, I find, between devils and brigands is, that the devils are less black than they are painted, and the brigands even more dirty than they are supposed to be. The eight rascals that formed a circle round us were so disgustingly filthy I should have preferred handing them my money with a pair of tongs. It was only with difficulty that one could ascertain whether their caps had originally been red or not; but no amount of possible scouring could have revealed the true colour of their clothes. All the rocks of the kingdom had stained their cotton shirts, while their jackets bore traces of every variety of soil on which they had reclined. Their hands, their faces, and moustaches were all of the same reddish-grey as the ground on which they stood. The chief of the little band that had captured us was not in any way distinguishable from his fellows, except that perhaps his face, hands, and clothes were, if anything, a shade or so the dirtier. As he bent down his tall loathsome figure over me to examine me more closely, I felt my brow grazed by his stiff moustaches. He seemed to me not unlike a tiger smelling his prey before tearing it to pieces. When he had gratified

his curiosity he ordered Dimitrius to empty his pockets.

The guide made no objection, and at once threw down a knife, a tobacco-pouch, and three Mexican piastres—altogether about sixteen francs, French money.

"Is that all?" asked the brigand.

"Yes, brother," replied the trembling Dimitrius.

"You are the servant?"

"Yes, brother."

"Take back a piastre, you mustn't return to Athens penniless." So much unexpected generosity encouraged Dimitrius to bargain.

"You might leave me two," said he. "I've two horses hired from the riding-school, down below in the valley, and I shall have to pay for them."

"You can explain to Zimmermann that we have honoured you by relieving you of your superfluous cash."

"But what if he wants me to pay him?"

"Tell him he ought to consider himself very lucky to get his horses back at all."

"But he knows you don't need horses. Of what use would they be to you up here in the mountain?"

"Hold your tongue. Who's that tall lanky-looking fellow near you?"

I answered for myself: "A poor but honest German gentleman, whose property can never enrich you."

"You speak very good Greek, and since you understand me so well, empty your pockets."

Immediately I placed twenty francs, my tobacco, my pipe, and my handkerchief on the ground at his feet.

"What's that?" asked my Grand Inquisitor.

"A handkerchief."

"What the devil do you do with it?"

"Blow my nose on it to be sure."

"If that is so, why did you tell me you were poor? Only Milords use pocket-handkerchiefs. Take that box off your back and open it."

I obeyed. My knapsack contained some plants, a book, a knife, a small bottle of arsenic, a half-empty gourd, and the relics of my breakfast, at which Mrs. Simons threw a hungry glare. Before my property changed masters I made bold to offer these fragments of a frugal meal to her, which she then and there devoured. To my astonishment this display of voracity actually scandalized the thieves, who began to mutter among themselves. I overheard the word "Schismatic!"

while the brigands meanwhile made a good half-dozen signs of the Cross, and looked most dreadfully shocked.

"If you have a pocket-handkerchief about you, surely you must have a watch," said the brigand to me somewhat sharply; "put it down with the rest."

With a deep sigh I yielded up my silver watch, an heirloom, weighing not less than four ounces. The wretches now passed it from hand to hand, and evidently greatly admired it. I began to hope that since admiration is said to have a softening effect it might induce them to return me something, so I ventured to beg them to restore my tin-box. On this the chief roughly told me to hold my tongue.

"At least," said I, "let me have a couple of piastres to help me to get back to town."

With a sardonic laugh the ruffian replied: "You never will need piastres again."

At this I felt awfully uncomfortable, as well you may imagine. Now came the turn of Mrs. Simons. Before putting her hand into her pocket she apostrophized the brigands with much majesty in her mother-tongue. English, you know, is one of those languages you can talk with your mouth full. In a threatening tone she said, while still

munching my ham-sandwiches: "Reflect well upon what you are about. I am English, and English citizens are inviolable all the world over. What you take from me won't benefit you much, I can assure you, and will cost you dear in the end. England will avenge me, and you'll all be hanged as sure as you were born. Now, if you want my money, take it, but it will burn your fingers, for it is English—English, I say: do you hear?—English."

"What does she say?" asked the spokesman of the brigands, smiling grimly.

Dimitrius answered: "She says she's English."

"So much the better, the English are all rich. Tell her to empty her pockets at once."

The poor lady obeyed, and threw down with no little speed a purse that contained about twelve sovereigns. As her watch was not in sight, and they did not attempt to search us, she was able to keep it. Our conquerors' clemency also left her in possession of her pocket-handkerchief.

Mary-Ann handed over her watch, to which was attached a bunch of amulets against the evil eye, and then with a dainty air of protestation she yielded up a certain small morocco bag that she usually wore slung across her shoulders. The

brigand chief pounced upon it and opened it as eagerly and systematically as would have done a custom-house officer on duty. He drew from it a little English dressing-case, a bottle of smelling-salts, some peppermint-drops, and something like four pounds in English money.

"Now," said Mary-Ann impatiently, "you can let us go: we have nothing more for you."

The brigand with a threatening gesture signified that all was not finished. The chief of the band knelt down before the little heap of our goods, and chuckling, summoned to him the "good old man." He next counted the money over gloatingly, and gave the monk forty-five francs.

"You see," said Mrs. Simons, pushing my elbow, "the monk and Dimitrius betrayed us, and now they do not scruple to share the spoil."

"No, madam!" I interrupted. "Dimitrius has only got back a small portion of what was stolen from him. That is done everywhere. At Hamburg, when a traveller has lost his last coin at the roulette-table, the director of the establishment gives him the wherewithal to return home."

"But the monk?"

"He only received a tenth of the booty, according to custom. Don't be angry with him, but

rather be grateful, for after all he wished to help us, although his convent was interested in our capture."

The discussion was interrupted by the adieux of the guide. He had been set free, and was about to depart.

"Wait for me," cried I; "we'll return together."

He turned back, stood still, and shook his head woefully, and solemnly said: "You will be prisoners for some days, and will only see Athens again when your ransom has been paid. I'm going to inform the Milord of what has happened. Have these ladies any messages for his lordship?"

"Tell him," said Mrs. Simons, "to go to the Embassy, then to the Piræus to see the Admiral. Let him lodge a complaint with the Foreign Office, and write to Lord Palmerston and to the *Times*. We must be taken away from here by force of arms, or by official authority, but I won't have a penny spent to purchase our liberty!"

"As for me," said I calmly, "pray tell my friends in what hands you have left me. If a few hundred drachmas are necessary to liberate a poor devil of a naturalist, they are sure to find them. These gentlemen of the high-road can hardly set a high price on my head. While you're here, be

so good as to ask them the lowest amount they will demand for my ransom."

"Quite useless, my dear Mr. Hermann; it is not they who will fix the price."

"Then who will?"

"Their chief, Hadji Stavros, the King of the Mountains!"

CHAPTER IV

HADJI STAVROS

DIMITRIUS went back to Athens, the monk returned to his bees, and our new masters drove us along like sheep by a rough path that led to the King's encampment. In her determination to remain independent, Mrs. Simons obstinately refused to budge. The brigands threatened to lift her bodily, and to carry her between them, but she vowed she would not let them even so much as touch her. Her daughter, however, smoothed down her ruffled plumes by telling her that probably Hadji Stavros would give her a breakfast.

Mary-Ann, herself, seemed more surprised than alarmed. The low-classed brigands that had made us prisoners, showed us a certain amount of deference, since they did not attempt to search our persons, and kept aloof from the ladies. Instead of seizing our effects, which they had asked us to give up, they left us in possession of them, and

apparently had not noticed that the ladies wore ear-rings, and had even allowed them to retain their gloves. Needless to say, these details prove conclusively that there exists a far cry between the Greek and the Spanish or Italian robbers, who cut off a finger to get at a ring, and slit an ear for the sake of a pearl or a diamond. The only thing, so far, we had to dread, was the payment of a ransom : and it appeared more than probable that we should get scot free. How were we to imagine that Hadji could detain us with impunity at so short a distance as five leagues from the Court, the capital, and within easy reach not only of the Greek army, but also of a battalion of British troops, and an English man-of-war then stationed at the Piræus? Thus argued Mary-Ann ; but my mind involuntarily reverted to the awful fate of the little Mistra girls, and I began to feel correspondingly depressed. I was afraid that Mrs. Simons, with her explosions of patriotic extravagance, might expose her daughter to some great danger, and resolved to try and make her understand her real position.

We went along, one by one, up a narrow path. Between each of us strode one of our ferocious-looking captors. The way seemed to me as if it never would end, and I asked at least twenty times

when we were likely to arrive at our destination. The country was hideous: the barren rock scarcely sufficed for the nourishment of a small sort of sturdy, stunted green oak, and for tufts of thorny thyme, the prickles of which clung to our legs in a very disagreeable manner. Our jailers were not at all cheerful, and their triumphal march was not unlike a funeral procession. They smoked in silence huge cigars as thick as a finger. None of them talked, but a few chanted, through their noses, a sort of Greek folklore song, which was the reverse of gay. Like their ancient ruins, the modern Greeks are melancholy.

About eleven o'clock a fierce barking announced that we were nearing the camp. Ten or a dozen enormous dogs with rough curly coats flew at us barking savagely, and showing their long sharp teeth. Our escorts threw stones at them, and after a pitched battle, which lasted a good quarter of an hour, peace was declared. These inhospitable monsters were the advanced guards of the King of the Mountains. But that was not their only use, for occasionally they are known to devour a harmless shepherd, a belated traveller, or even a comrade of Hadji Stavros! The King keeps them, as the Sultans did their fierce Janissaries, for self-preservation.

His camp was pitched on a sort of natural platform, some seven or eight hundred yards in circumference. I looked in vain for our jailers' tents. Brigands are not Sybarites, and in April they usually sleep out in the open. I saw neither heaps of spoils, nor even a sign of treasure; in short, nothing of that which one associates with the camp of a brigand chief. I found out later that Hadji Stavros takes upon himself the sale of the booty, each man receiving his share in money, and disposing of it as he chooses. Some employ it in trade, others take mortgages on houses in Athens, others buy land in their villages; none wastes the product of their robberies. Our arrival interrupted the breakfast of twenty or thirty men, who came towards us, carrying their bread-and-cheese in their hands. The chief feeds his soldiers. They receive every day a ration of bread, oil, wine, cheese, caviare, chilis, bitter olives, and on non-abstinence days, meat also. The gourmands, who want mallows, or herbs, are free to seek for these delicacies in the hills.

The brigands, like people of other classes, rarely light a fire to cook their meals; they eat their meats cold, their vegetables raw. I remarked that those that surrounded us rigidly observed the law of abstinence. It was the eve of Ascension

Day, and these worthies, the most innocent of whom had at least one murder on his conscience, would not for the whole world have eaten the leg of a chicken. To point their guns at two Englishwomen was a peccadillo. Mrs. Simons had committed a much graver sin by eating lamb the day before the festival of the Ascension.

The men of our escort fully indulged the curiosity of their comrades. They were overwhelmed with questions, and answered them all. They displayed the booty made, and my watch had a success that flattered my vanity. Mary-Ann's gold hunting-case watch passed almost unremarked. In this first sitting the admiration felt for my watch resulted in a sort of consideration being extended to me. In the eyes of these primitive beings, the possessor of such a jewel must be at the very least a Milord.

The curiosity of the brigands was irritating, but not insolent. None of them seemed to wish to treat us as vanquished enemies. They knew that we were in their power, and that in a few days they would exchange us for so many gold pieces, but they did not take advantage of the circumstance to ill-treat us, or to be disrespectful. Good sense, the imperishable genius of the Greek people, told them that we were the representatives of

a different, and in a certain measure superior, race. Victorious barbarism rendered a secret homage to civilization in distress. Many of them never had beheld European clothes, and stared at us as if we were inhabitants of another world. They furtively touched my overcoat to find out of what material it was made. In fact they would have liked to divest me of all my garments, to examine each in detail. Perhaps they would not have been sorry to break me into two or three pieces in order to study the internal structure of a "Milord"; but I am sure that while doing so they would have made many excuses for taking such a liberty.

Mrs. Simons soon lost patience. That half-famished lady didn't care to be at close quarters with these dirty cheese-eaters, who did not even offer her a morsel of their victuals. It is not to every one's taste to be glared at. The good lady did not like to be looked at in the light of a living curiosity, although she certainly might have passed for such in any quarter of the globe. As for Mary-Ann, she was sinking from fatigue. A six-hours journey, without food, added to the surprise of being captured, had quite overcome her. Fancy a young girl brought up in clover, accustomed to walk on velvety carpets or smooth

lawns, undergoing such an ordeal! It was not to be wondered at that her boots were already torn by the rough stony roads, and that the hem of her dress, which caught in the thorns, was in rags. She had spent the previous evening in the drawing-rooms of the English Legation, quietly turning over Wyse's admirable albums. Now, without any transition, she found herself in a savage country amidst a horde of barbarians, and she had not even the consolation of saying, "'Tis but a dream!" for it was, alas! only too cruel a reality!

We were not at the end of our miseries. There came another invasion that rendered our position intolerable. It did not consist of brigands, but was much worse. The Greeks carry about with them a collection of small insects, lively, capricious, impossible to catch, which never leave them, afford occupation even during sleep, and by their jumps and bites quicken the ideas, and accelerate the circulation of the blood. The brigands' fleas, of which I can show you some specimens in my entomological collection, are robust, stronger, and more active than those of the inhabitants of towns. The open air evidently has special virtues! But I soon perceived that they were not satisfied with their fate, and found the soft skin of a young German better than the

tanned hides of their masters! An armed emigration attacked my poor legs! First, I felt a violent itching round my ankles: this was the declaration of war. Two minutes later, an *avant-garde* attacked my right calf. I pressed it hard with my hand. But, taking advantage of this diversion, the enemy marched rapidly on my left wing, and took up position on the heights of the knees. I was out-manœuvred, and all resistance was useless. Had I been alone in a corner, I might have effected some skirmishes with fair success. But beautiful Mary-Ann was there, red as a cherry, and possibly also the victim of the same secret enemy. I neither dared to complain nor to defend myself; but devoured my grief without looking at Miss Simons, and suffered for her sake a martyrdom, for which she will never be grateful. At last, exasperated, and decided to fly before the ever-mounting invasion, I asked to be taken to the King. This recalled our guides to their duty. They inquired the whereabouts of Hadji Stavros, and learned that he was in his office.

"At length," said Mrs. Simons with a sigh, "I shall have a chair to sit in."

She took my arm, offered her own to her daughter, and we walked deliberately in the direction pointed out by the crowd. The offices were

not far from the camp, and we reached them in a few minutes.

They had no tables or chairs, or indeed any kind of furniture. Hadji was seated with his legs crossed under him in tailor-fashion, on a carpet placed under the shade of a fir-tree. Four secretaries and two servants were grouped round him. A youth of about sixteen or eighteen passed his whole time in cleaning and refilling his master's chibouk. At his waist the brigand chief wore a tobacco-pouch, embroidered in gold and fine pearls, and silver pincers to take up the coals with. Another servant was occupied all day preparing the cups of coffee, glasses of water, and sweetmeats destined to refresh the royal lips. The secretaries, seated on the bare rock, wrote on their knees with pointed reeds. Each of them had near his hand a long copper box containing reeds, a knife, and an ink-bottle. A few cylinders, like those used by our soldiers to contain their official papers, served as a sort of deposit for the archives. The paper was not of local manufacture for very good reasons, and on each sheet one could read the word "Bath."

The King proved to be a fine old man, wonderfully well preserved, upright, thin, supple, clean and polished like a new sword. His long white

moustaches hung under his chin like marble stalactites. The rest of the face was clean-shaved, the skull bare to the back of the head, where a large braid of white hair was coiled up under the cap. The expression of his features seemed calm and thoughtful. A pair of light-blue eyes and a square chin testified to the possession of an indomitable will. His face was long, and the way in which the wrinkles were placed made it appear more so. The furrows of the forehead divided in the middle and met the brows; two large, wide lines descended perpendicularly to the meeting of commissure—the lips; it seemed as if the weight of the moustache dragged down the muscles of the face. I've seen a good many septuagenarians, and even dissected one who might have lived to have reached a hundred if he had not been run over by a diligence, but I never had seen before an old man so strong or so robust as Hadji Stavros.

He wore the costume of Tino, and of all the islands of the Archipelago. His red cap made a large pleat round the forehead. He had a black cloth jacket braided with black silk, and immense blue trousers that require more than twenty yards of stuff, and high, supple, strong Russian leather boots. There was nothing rich about his costume except a sash belt embroidered in gold and jewels,

which might be worth about a hundred pounds. In its folds he carried an embroidered cashmere purse, a candjar in a silver sheath, and a ramrod to match.

When in the midst of his clerks, Hadji, beyond moving the tips of his fingers to count the beads of his rosary, and his lips to dictate his correspondence, remained immovable. It was one of those beautiful rosaries of milky amber, which serve less to say prayers by, than to occupy the leisure of the Turks. As we approached he raised his head, instantly guessed how we happened to have come there, and said with a gravity that was not in the least ironical: "Sit down: you are very welcome."

"Sir," cried Mrs. Simons, "I'm English—and——"

He stopped her garrulity by smacking his tongue against the teeth—and very fine teeth they were—of his upper jaw. "By and by, if you please," said he; "I'm busy just now." He only understood Greek, Mrs. Simons only English; his expression was so eloquent that the good lady could not mistake his meaning.

We sat down in the dust. Fifteen or twenty brigands placed themselves round us, while the King, who had no secrets to conceal, quietly dic-

tated his family and business letters. The chief of the troop that had captured us whispered a warning in his ear. He replied in a haughty tone: "What if the Milord does understand? I do no harm, and all the world may hear me. Go, and sit down! And you, Spiro, write: it is to my daughter."

He blew his nose very cleverly with his fingers, and dictated in a grave soft voice:

"My Dear Heart:

"Your school-mistress tells me that you are stronger, and that your cold has passed away with the winter. But she is not at all satisfied with your diligence, and complains that since the beginning of April you neglect your studies. Madame Mairos says that you are pre-occupied; that you sit with your elbows placed on a book, and your eyes gazing upwards, as if your thoughts were elsewhere. My dear child, I cannot sufficiently impress upon you the necessity of work. Follow the example my life affords you. If I had taken things leisurely, like so many others, I never should have attained the rank I occupy in society. You must be worthy of me, and that is why I make so many sacrifices for your education. You know that I never have refused you either masters or

books you asked for, but my money must not be thrown away. The 'Walter Scott' and the 'Robinson,' and all the English books you wanted have arrived at the Piræus: let them be fetched from the custom-house by our friends in Hermes Street. At the same time you will receive the bracelet you desired, and the steel machine, called a crinoline, to puff out the skirts of your dresses. If your Viennese piano is not, as you say, a good one, and you wish for a Pleyel, you shall have it. After harvest I'll plunder a couple of villages, and it would go hard with me if I did not find in them the price of a fine piano. I think, like you, that you must know music, but you must especially learn foreign languages. Employ your Sundays as I told you, and take advantage of our friends' good-nature. You should speak French, English, and, above all, German. For, you are not made to live in this absurd little country, and I would rather see you dead than married to a Greek.

"As a king's daughter, you can marry only a prince. I don't mean a sham prince like our Phanariots, who boast of their descent from the Greek emperors, and whom I would not have for servants, but a real genuine prince, who sits on a throne and wears a crown. There are a few quite acceptable princes in Germany, and my fortune is ample

enough to allow you to make your choice. If Germans have reigned in our country, I do not see why in your turn you should not reign in theirs. Learn their language as quickly as you can, and in your next letter tell me what progress you have made. And now, my child, I embrace you tenderly, and send you, with your quarterly allowance, my paternal benediction."

Mrs. Simons leaned towards me and said sharply: "I suppose he's dictating our sentence to these brigands?"

"No, my dear madam, he's writing to his daughter."

"About our capture?"

"No; about a piano, a crinoline, and Walter Scott."

"That sort of correspondence may last a long time. Is he going to invite us to breakfast?"

"Here comes his servant bringing us refreshments."

The cafedji of the King stood before us, with three cups of coffee, a box of rahat-lakoum, and a pot of preserves. Mrs. Simons and her daughter refused the coffee with disgust, because it was made in Turkish fashion, and looked thick and muddy. I swallowed a cup of it like a true East-

ern gourmet. The preserves, a kind of rose-scented sherbet, they did not care for much, because we had but one spoon between us to eat it up with. The fastidious are certainly much to be pitied in this free-and-easy country. But the rahat-lakoum, cut into pieces, met with great success. They ate plenty of this perfumed starchy jelly, and emptied the box. Meanwhile the King dictated the following letter:

"MESSRS. BARCLAY & CO.,

"31 *Cavendish Square, London.*

"GENTLEMEN:

"I see by your favour of April 5, and the account that accompanies it, that I have at present £22,750 sterling to my credit. Be so good as to invest this sum, half in the English Three per Cents, half in shares of the 'Crédit Mobilier,' before the next dividend falls due. Sell out my shares of the Royal Britannic Bank. The fact is, it is a business in which I have no longer much confidence. Buy in exchange shares in the London Omnibus Company. If you can sell my house in the Strand for £15,000 (it was worth that much in 1852), buy 'Vieille-Montagne' for the same amount. Send a hundred guineas to the brothers Balli: it is my subscription to the Hellenic school at Liverpool. I have seriously weighed the pro-

posal you have submitted to me, and after much reflection have decided to confine myself to ready-money transactions. The apparently excellent bargains you advise seem altogether too risky to inspire the father of a family with much confidence. I am quite aware that you would treat my capital with the well-known prudence that distinguishes your honoured house; but were the profits of which you speak certain, I should, I must confess, feel a repugnance to leave my daughter a fortune created by gambling.

"Yours faithfully,

"HADJI STAVROS."

"Has he been writing about us?" asked Mary-Ann.

"Not yet. His Majesty is making up his accounts."

"Accounts here? I thought they only did that at home."

"Is not your father a partner in a bank?"

"Yes; in the house of Barclay & Co."

"Are there two bankers of the name in London?"

"Not that I know of."

"Does your house do business with the East?"

"With all the four quarters of the globe."

"Do you live in Cavendish Square?"

"No; but the offices are there. Our town-house is in Piccadilly."

"Thanks. Now, please, let me listen. The old man's correspondence is really most interesting."

"ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE NATIONAL COMPANY KING OF THE MOUNTAINS, 1855 TO 1856.

"*The King's Camp, April 30, 1856.*

"GENTLEMEN:

"The agent whom you have honoured with your confidence begs to submit for your approbation, for the fourteenth time, the summary of operations for the year.

"Since the day when the deed constituting our Society was signed in the office of Mr. Tsappas, Solicitor of the Court at Athens, never have our undertakings met with more serious obstacles. The regular business of an eminently national institution has had to be maintained in the presence of a foreign occupation, under the eyes of two armies, if not hostile, at least ill-disposed towards our institution. The military occupation of the Piræus, the surveillance of the Turkish frontier conducted with a severity without precedent in history, have restricted our activity within a narrow circle, and hampered our zeal. Within this narrow

zone our resources have been reduced by the general penury, the poverty of the harvests, and the universal scarcity of money. The olives have failed to fulfil the hopes entertained of them ; the cereals have been unsatisfactory ; and the vine is yet suffering from the disease. Under these unsatisfactory circumstances, it was almost impossible for us to take advantage of the tolerance of the authorities, and of the mildness of a paternal government. Our enterprise is so intimately allied to the interests of the country, that it can only flourish in the midst of the general prosperity, and it feels the effects of all public misfortunes ; since, clearly, from those who have nothing, one can take nothing, or at least very little.

" Foreign travellers, whose curiosity is so useful to the kingdom, and to us, have been extremely scarce. The English tourists, who formerly constituted an exceedingly important item of our revenue, have failed altogether. Two young Americans, stopped on the road to Pentelicos, cheated us of their ransom. A spirit of distrust, originated by some French and English newspaper correspondents, keeps out of our reach many people whose capture would be most profitable. Yet, gentlemen, such is the vitality of our Institution, that it has more successfully resisted this

crisis than either agriculture, trade, or commerce. The capital with which you have entrusted me has prospered not indeed as well as I could have desired, but far better than I could have wished.

"I shall say no more, but let figures speak for me. Figures are more eloquent than ever was Demosthenes. The capital of our Society, limited at first to the modest sum of 50,000 francs, was raised to 120,000 francs by three successive flotations of 500-franc shares.

"Our gross receipts, from May 1, 1855, to April 30, 1856, were 261,482 francs.

"Our expenses may be divided as follows:

	FRANCS
A tenth paid to churches and monasteries	26,148
Interest on capital at the legal rate of 10 per cent	12,000
Pay and food of 80 men, each at 650 francs per annum	52,000
Material, arms, etc.	7,056
Repairs of the road to Thebes, which had become impracticable, and where unfortunately we found no travellers to stop	2,540
Expenses for watching the high-roads	5,835
Stationery	3
Paid to journalists	11,900
Sums given in rewards to sundry employés, attached to various administrative and judicial offices of the State	18,000
Total	135,482

"All deductions made, we find a net profit of 126,000 francs.

"In accordance with our statutes, this surplus is divided as follows:

	FRANCS
Reserve fund at the bank of Athens	6,000
A third belonging to our agent-general	40,000
To be divided between the shareholders	80,000

Or, to each share, 333 francs 33 centimes.

"Add to these 333 francs 33 centimes, 50 francs interest and 25 francs reserve fund, and we have a total of 408 francs, 33 centimes per share. Your money is therefore placed at 80 per cent.

"Such, gentlemen, are the results of the last campaign. Judge of the kind of future that is reserved to us when the foreign occupation shall no longer weigh upon our country and our operations."

The King dictated this report without consulting a single note, without hesitating as to a figure, and without the slightest mbarrassment.

I never could have believed that so old a man could possess so excellent a memory! He affixed his seal at the bottom of the letter: that was his way of signing, for although his Majesty reads fluently, he never has found time to learn to write. This was the case, if I remember rightly, with Charlemagne and Alfred the Great.

While the Under-Secretaries of State were occupied in copying his correspondence for the day, to deposit it afterward in the royal archives, Hadji gave audience to some subaltern officers

who had returned with their detachments. Each of these men, seating himself before him, placed his hand on his heart, and proceeded to make his report in a few concise and respectful words. I declare to you that St. Louis under his oak could not possibly have inspired more respect to the inhabitants of Vincennes on the memorable occasion when they came to offer him homage. The first who presented himself was an evil-looking man, a regular jail-bird. He came from the island of Corfu, and had been pursued for arson, but was nevertheless welcomed with apparent effusion by Hadji. His talents had already obtained him promotion. But, for all this, I subsequently discovered that he was not esteemed, but suspected of retaining a part of the booty. The King was inflexible on the chapter of probity. Whenever a man was found cheating, his Majesty expelled him ignominiously from the company, saying with bitter irony: "Go! and become a magistrate!"

Hadji asked the little man from Corfu where he had been.

"I went with fifteen men to the Ravine of the Swallows, on the road to Thebes, and fell in with a detachment of the Line—twenty-five men."

"Where are their guns?"

"They have them still. We couldn't have used them for want of caps."

"Good: and afterward?"

"It was market-day: I stopped some of the people returning home."

"How many?"

"One hundred and forty-two persons."

"Good, good. And what do you bring with you?"

"Forty pounds, five shillings, and a few pence."

"Five and tenpence a head! That's not much!"

"Yes it is, when you remember they were peasants!"

"Hadn't they then sold their goods?"

"Some of them. The others had made purchases."

The small native of Corfu opened a heavy sack he had on his arm, and spread the contents before the secretaries, who began to count the total amount, which consisted of thirty or forty Mexican piastres, a handful or so of Austrian zwanzigers, and an enormous quantity of copper pieces. Some crumpled bits of paper turned out to be ten-franc bank-notes.

"You've no jewels?" demanded the King.

"No."

"There were then no women?"

"I found nothing worth bringing back."

"What's that on your finger?"

"A ring."

"In gold?"

"Or copper, I don't know which."

"How did you get it?"

"I bought it two months ago."

"If you really had bought it, you would know whether it is copper or gold: give it here!"

The man of Corfu parted with it unwillingly enough, and it was at once placed in a little coffer full of jewels.

"I forgive you," said the King, "on account of your bad bringing-up. The people of your country dishonour robbery by their knavishness. If I had only Ionians in my band, I should be forced to have turnstiles on the roads like those at the doors of the London Exhibitions, to keep count of both travellers and money."

The next gentleman called up for examination was a big healthy young man, with a pleasant expression of face. His round prominent eyes looked frank and mild. His half-opened lips displayed two rows of superb teeth. I was delighted with him at first sight, and thought that he must have strayed into this bad company, and would

surely eventually return to the right road. My face must have pleased him too, for he bowed civilly before sitting down.

Hadji said : "What have you done, Vasili ?"

"I arrived yesterday evening with my six men at Pigadia, Senator Zimbélis's village. Zimbélis was away as usual ; but his relations, his farmers, and his tenants were at home and in bed."

"Well ?"

"I entered the inn, awoke the khanji, and bought twenty-five trusses of straw. By way of payment—I killed him."

"Good !"

"Then we carried the straw to the basements of the houses, which are all of osier or planks, and we set fire to it in seven places at once. The matches were good ; the wind came from the north, so the fire caught easily."

"Good !"

"We drew back quietly towards the well ; all the village was on foot, and the men came with their pails to get water. We drowned four we didn't know, and the others escaped."

"Good !"

"Then we returned to the village. There was no one there but a little child whom his parents had forgotten, crying like a small crow fallen out

of its nest. So I threw it into a burning house, and it cried no more."

"Good!"

"Then we took burning brands and fired the olive-trees. It was a success all round. We set out again to return to the camp, supped and slept on our road, and we arrived at nine o'clock all quite well and without a burn."

"Good. Senator Zimbélis will make no more speeches against us. Now another!"

Vasili retired, bowing as curtly as before, but I did not return the salute. He was instantly replaced by the tall rascal that had taken us prisoners. Singularly enough, the first actor in the drama in which I was to play a part bore the name of Sophocles. When he began, I felt my blood run cold in my veins. I now entreated Mrs. Simons to abstain from all imprudent words. She answered that she was English, and knew how to behave. The King begged us to be silent, and allow the orator to speak.

He displayed first the things he had taken from us, and then drew from his sash forty Austrian ducats, making about four hundred and seventy francs—less than twenty-five pounds.

"The ducats," said he, "come from Castia; the rest was given to me by the Milords. You

told me to beat the country round, and I began by the village."

"You were wrong," said the King. "The people of Castia are our neighbours; you should have left them alone. How shall we ever live in safety if we make enemies at our door? Besides, they are excellent creatures, who at times assist us."

"Oh! I took nothing from the charcoal-burners. They all ran away to the mountain without giving me the time to speak to them. But the magistrate had the gout, and I found him at home."

"What did you say to him?"

"I asked him for money, and he declared he had none. So I put him into a sack with his cat. I don't know what the beast did to him, but he soon began to cry out that his treasure was behind the house under a big stone; and surely there I found the ducats."

"You did wrong. He'll raise the whole village against us."

"Oh, no! On leaving I forgot to open the sack, so the cat has no doubt scratched his eyes out."

"That was quite right then! But, once for all, I won't have our neighbours molested. Now, go!"

It was our turn next. Instead of commanding us to appear before him, Hadji came, and gravely seated himself on the ground near us. This mark of deference appeared to us a favourable sign. Mrs. Simons began to apostrophize him furiously. I, foreseeing too well what she might say, and knowing she could not restrain the intemperance of her language, in the hope of silencing her, offered to interpret. The King looked me over very coldly, and summoned to him the tiny man from Corfu, who, strange to say, spoke English.

"Madam," said the King to Mrs. Simons, "you appear indignant. Have you any complaint to make against the men who brought you here?"

"It's atrocious!" the virago cried. "Your rascals took me prisoner, threw me down in the dust, and robbed me, worn out as I am with fatigue and hunger."

"Pray accept my apologies. I am obliged to employ men without breeding. I beg you to believe that in acting thus they have transgressed my orders. You are English?"

"Yes, and from London!"

"I have been to London, and know and esteem the English. I am aware they have good appetites, and trust you observed that I hastened

to offer you refreshments. I know that ladies in your country are not accustomed to rough roads, and regret that you were hurried. I also know that the English only take with them on a journey what is really necessary, and shall not forgive Sophocles for having robbed you; above all, if you are a person of position."

"I move in the best society in London."

"Be so good as to take back your money. You are rich?"

"Certainly."

"Does not this dressing-case belong to you?"

"To my daughter."

"Take it back, I beg. You are *very* rich?"

"Very rich! Of course I am," replied the imprudent old lady.

"Do not these things belong to this gentleman, your son?"

"He is not my son," burst out Mrs. Simons indignantly. "He's a German. Since I am English, how on earth can I have a German son?"

"Of course not. Quite right. Have you an income of say eight hundred pounds a year?"

"More than that."

"A carpet for these ladies! Is it so much as twelve hundred pounds a year?"

"Still more."

"Sophocles is a churl whom I shall punish. Lagothetes, order a dinner to be prepared for these ladies. Is it possible, madam, that you are a millionaire?"

"It is the truth," said Mrs. Simons, boastfully.

"I am indeed ashamed of the manner in which you have been treated. No doubt you know the best people in Athens?"

"I know the English Minister, and if you had ventured——"

"Ah! madam! and you have certainly acquaintances among the merchants, the bankers?"

"My brother, who is in Athens, knows several of the principal bankers."

"I'm delighted to hear it! Sophocles, come here! Beg these ladies' pardon."

Sophocles muttered some excuses between his teeth, and the King continued: "These ladies are English women of distinction. Their fortune amounts to more than a million. They are received at the English Embassy; their brother, who is in Athens, is acquainted with the chief bankers in the place."

"Quite right," said Mrs. Simons.

"You ought to have brought these ladies here

with all the respect due to their station and fortune."

"Good!" exclaimed Mrs. Simons.

"To have brought them here gently."

"What for?" murmured Mary-Ann.

"And to have refrained from touching their luggage. When one has the honour of meeting in the mountain persons of the rank of these good ladies, one salutes them respectfully, leads them to the camp with deference, pays them every attention, and endeavours to make things as agreeable as possible for them until their brother or their ambassador sends us a ransom of four thousand pounds sterling to free them."

Poor Mrs. Simons! dear Mary-Ann! Neither one nor the other expected such a conclusion as this to so graceful a speech. As for me, I was not at all surprised. I knew what a cunning old rascal we had to deal with. So I spoke out, and said point-blank: "You can keep what your men took from me, and that is all you ever will have of mine. I am poor; my father has nothing. My brothers often have to eat dry bread. I know neither bankers nor ambassadors, and if you go to the expense of keeping me in the hope of a ransom, you'll be greatly mistaken."

A murmur of incredulity rose from the audi-

ence, but the King appeared to believe what I said.

"In that case I shall not commit the fault of keeping you against your wish. I prefer to send you back to the town. Madam will entrust you with a letter for her brother, and you will leave to-day. If, however, you wish to remain a day or two in the mountain, I offer you hospitality; for I suppose you have not come here with that great case just to look at the landscape."

This little speech relieved me considerably. I looked around me with satisfaction. The King, his secretaries, and his soldiers, appeared to me far less terrible than they did an hour ago, and the neighbouring rocks more picturesque, since I saw them with the eyes of a guest instead of with those of a prisoner. My desire to behold Athens suddenly calmed down, and I accustomed myself to the idea of passing a couple of days in the mountain. I felt that my advice would be useful to Mary-Ann's mother. The good lady was in a state of excitement that might easily be her eventual ruin. Supposing she continued obstinate, and refused a ransom? Before England came to her rescue she might have drawn down misfortune on a head that was very dear to me! At least I could not leave without having told her the story

of the little girls of Mistra. What more can I say? You know my passion for botany. The Parnasian flora is very tempting in the month of April. Five or six rare and famous plants are to be found in the region. The *Borgana variabilis*, for instance, which was originally discovered and named by M. Borg de Saint Vincent. Was I to leave such a hiatus in my herbal, and not present the Hamburg Museum with a *Borgana variabilis*?

I answered the King as follows: "I accept your hospitality, but on one condition."

"What is it?"

"That you return my case."

"Agreed; but also on one condition."

"Let me hear it!"

"That you tell me of what use it is to you."

"Willingly! It serves to hold the plants I collect."

"And why do you look for plants? To sell them?"

"Heavens, no! I'm not a merchant, but a scientist."

He held out his hand, and said with visible pleasure: "Delighted to hear it! Science is a fine thing! Our forefathers were learned, our grand-

children may be so. As for us, we never have had time to study. No doubt learned men are much esteemed in your country?"

"Immensely."

"They get good positions?"

"Sometimes."

"Are well paid?"

"Sufficiently."

"They pin little ribbons on their breasts?"

"From time to time."

"Is it true that the towns vie with each other for the honour of possessing them?"

"As regards Germany, it's true."

"And that their death is considered a public calamity?"

"Assuredly."

"I'm glad to hear what you tell me. So you are not on bad terms, I suppose, with your fellow-citizens?"

"On the contrary. It is their liberality that has permitted me to come to Greece."

"You have travelled at their expense?"

"For the past six months."

"You are then very learned?"

"I have the title of doctor."

"Is there a higher grade?"

"No."

"And how many doctors are there in the town you inhabit?"

"I don't know exactly; but certainly not so many as there are generals in Athens."

"Oh! really! Then I'll not deprive your country of so precious a person. You will return to Hamburg, doctor. What would people say there if they heard that you are a prisoner in our mountains?"

"That it is a misfortune."

"Well, well! rather than lose a man such as you are, the town of Hamburg will surely sacrifice a small sum of six hundred pounds. Take back your tin-case; go about; herborize; and pursue the course of your studies. Why don't you put that money in your pocket? I respect learned men too much to take anything from them. But your country is rich enough to pay for its glory. Fortunate young man! You see now to what an extent the title of doctor adds to your value! I would not have asked you for a penny of ransom had you been a dunce like myself!"

All my exclamations and objections were as fruitless as had been those of Mrs. Simons. The King dismissed us by pointing to our dining-room. Mrs. Simons hurried towards it, declaring that she would eat the meal, but never pay the bill. Mary-

Ann looked very depressed ; but youth is so variable that she uttered an exclamation of delight when she saw the place where our meal had been laid out for us. It was a little green nook framed in the rock. Smooth, thick grass served as a carpet, and laurels covered the steep rocky wall. The blue vault of heaven was spread over our heads, and two long-necked vultures hovering in the air added to the effect of the scene. In a corner, a stream limpid as crystal fell into a rustic basin, then gathered itself into a sort of tiny lake before it rolled in silvery rills down the precipitous flanks of the mountain. On that side the view extended to the portico of the Pentelicos, the vast white palace that dominates Athens, including also sombre olive woods, the dusty plains, the grey rounded outline of Hymettus, and the admirable Gulf of Saronica, as blue as a fragment detached from the skies. Mrs. Simons was distinctly not given to admire the beauties of nature, yet she admitted that so fine a view would be greatly appreciated in London or Paris.

The repast was as simple as those of the heroes of antiquity. A brown loaf baked in a stone oven, and smelling strongly of new-made bread, smoked on the grass. A big wooden jar was filled with clotted milk. Large olives and green chilis were

served on roughly-cut platters of wood. Near a coarsely chiselled, burnished copper vase, stood a well-filled leather-bottle. A goat's cheese rested on the linen in which it had been pressed, and five or six fresh lettuces offered an excellent salad ; but there was no trimming. The King had placed at our disposal his rustic silver service, consisting of rudely-cut spoons, and by way of forks, we used our fingers. They had not been hospitable enough to offer us any meat ; but so far as I was concerned, the golden tobacco of Ahnyros was worth more than all the beef and mutton in the land. One of the King's officers was told off to wait upon us, and to listen to what we said. Needless to say he was none other than the little fiend from Corfu, who, as I have already said, was fairly acquainted with English. He cut the bread with his dagger, and helped us to handfuls of everything, begging us to eat as much as we could. Mrs. Simons, without losing a bite, addressed him in a haughty tone.

" Sir," said she, " does your master suppose for a single moment that we shall pay him a ransom of four thousand pounds ?"

" He's sure of it, madam."

" He doesn't know what English people are."

" He knows them very well, madam, and so

do I. At Corfu I saw several distinguished English—Judges!"

"I congratulate you; but tell this Stavros that he had better supply himself with a good stock of patience, for it will be a long time before he gets the four thousand pounds he has promised himself!"

"He has commanded me to tell you that he expects the money on the 15th of May, at twelve o'clock precisely."

"And if it is not paid on the 15th at twelve?"

"Then, to his great regret, he will have to cut both your throats."

On hearing this terrible threat poor Mary-Ann dropped the piece of bread she was eating, and asked for a little wine. The brigand handed her a cupful, but hardly had she touched it with her lips than she uttered a cry of repugnance and alarm. The poor girl fancied that the wine was poisoned. I reassured her by drinking it up at one gulp.

"Don't be afraid," said I; "it's the taste of the resin."

"What do you mean?"

"The wine wouldn't keep in these bottles unless a certain quantity of resin was added to it, to

prevent it's getting spoiled. The mixture is unpleasant, but quite harmless."

In spite of my example, the ladies called for water. The brigand flew to the spring, and was back in two strides.

"You must understand," said he, smiling, "that the King would not be so foolish as to poison persons so precious as yourselves. As for you, doctor," turning towards me, "I am to tell you that you will be allowed thirty days to finish your studies, and find the amount of your ransom. My orders are, also, to provide you and these ladies with the necessary writing materials."

"Thanks," said Mrs. Simons; "we'll think of it eight days hence if we are not freed before."

"And by whom are you to be freed, madam?"

"By England!"

"England is rather far off."

"By the police."

"May it be as you desire! In the meantime, is there anything I can give you?"

"First of all, I want a bedroom."

"We have near here some grottoes, called the 'cowsheds.' You wouldn't be comfortable there, because sheep have been kept in them during the winter, and they have a nasty smell. I'll send the shepherds down below for a couple of tents and

you will camp here—until the arrival of the police."

"Then I want a lady's-maid."

"Nothing easier. Our men will go down to the plains and catch the first peasant girl that passes—if the carabineers don't prevent them."

"Also, I must have clothes, linen, toilet-napkins, a looking-glass, brushes, combs, scents, an embroidery-frame——"

"You ask for a great deal, madam, and to give you all that we should be obliged to take Athens. But we'll do our best. Count upon me, and not too much upon the police!"

"Heaven protect us!" said Mary-Ann.

A loud echo gave back a "Kyrie Eleison!"—"God have mercy on us!" The words proceeded from the "good old man." He had come to pay us a visit, and sang on his way to keep in training. He saluted us cordially, placed on the grass a vase full of honey, and sat down near us. "Eat some honey," said he; "my bees offer you a dessert."

I pressed his hand. The ladies turned away with disgust. They insisted on seeing in him an accomplice of the brigands. The poor "old man" never had dreamed of such a thing. He only knew how to chant his prayers, take care of his useful little bees, sell his honey, receive what was

due to his convent, and live in peace with all. His intelligence was limited, his ignorance complete, his conduct as innocent as that of a well-regulated machine. I don't believe that he knew how to distinguish between good and evil, nor between a thief and an honest man. His wisdom consisted in eating four big meals a day, and in managing prudently never to be more than half drunk. He was, altogether, one of the very best monks of his order.

I did honour to the present he had made us. This wild honey is no more like what you get in France than the flesh of the goat is like that of the lamb. One would have thought that the bees had distilled in an invisible alembic all the perfumes of the mountain. While eating my bread and honey, I forgot that I had to find in less than a month six hundred pounds, or lose my life.

In his turn the monk asked leave to refresh himself, and without waiting for permission he filled his cup to the brim. He drank to the health of each of us. Five or six of the brigands attracted by curiosity crept up close. Not to excite jealousy, he called them by their names, and drank to all. Soon, I bitterly regretted his visit. An hour after his arrival, half the band was seated in a circle round us.

In the absence of the King, who was enjoying his siesta, the men came one by one to make our acquaintance. Some offered their services, others brought a trifle of some kind. Another came without excuse or pretext, just as if he were at home. The more familiar among them begged me amicably to tell them our history; the timid kept behind their comrades, and insensibly pushed them on us. Some, after having looked at us until they were tired, lay down on the grass, and without the least coquetry, snored in the presence of my Mary-Ann. But, alas! the fleas did *not* sleep. They kept always coming higher, and the presence of their original proprietors rendered them so bold that I caught two or three on the back of my hand. I couldn't dispute the ground with them; they treated my poor person like a conquered land. At this moment I would have given more than one of the treasures of my herbal for a quarter of an hour of solitude. The ladies were of course too discreet to say anything, but I saw quite well, by some involuntary little starts, that we were fellow-sufferers. I caught them looking at one another, as much as to say: "The police will deliver us from the robbers, but who will save us from the fleas?" This mute complaint moved my chivalrous feelings. I was resigned to

anything, but to see Mary-Ann suffer was beyond my power. I rose resolutely, and said to our tormentors: "Be off with you! The King has lodged us here to live quietly until the arrival of our ransom. Our rest will cost us dear enough to give us the right to be alone. Are you not ashamed to crowd round a table like starving dogs? You've no business here. We don't want you; we want to see your backs. Are you afraid we shall escape? How? By the cascade? or the King's office? Leave us then in peace. Man of Corfu! drive them away, and I'll help you, if you like."

I immediately added the deed to the word; pushed away the loiterers, awoke those who were sleeping, and shook the monk. The man from Corfu aided me, and the troop, all armed with pistols and daggers as it was, began to move off with a sheep-like docility, grumbling, making short steps, shrugging their shoulders and turning their heads just like a band of school-boys driven back to their class-rooms at the sound of the bell announcing the end of the recreation.

At last we were alone with he of Corfu, and I asked Mrs. Simons if we should proceed to the division of the space allotted to us? "I want very little room," said I; "a corner will do to

pitch my tent. Behind these trees I shall do very well, and all the rest of the place will be yours. You will have the fountain close to you, and the noise will not be troublesome, since the cascade falls on the other side of the mountain."

My offer was ungraciously accepted. The ladies would have liked to keep all to themselves, and to make me pass the night in the middle of the troop. No doubt, British prudery would have gained by this separation, but I should have lost sight of Mary-Ann. And, besides, I was quite decided to keep at a distance from the fleas. The native of Corfu seconded my proposal, which rendered his surveillance easier. He was ordered to watch us night and day. It was agreed that he should sleep near my tent, but I insisted upon keeping a distance of some feet between us. The treaty concluded, I retired into my corner to give chase to my persecutors, but hardly had I begun, when the men reappeared under pretence of bringing in our tents.

Mrs. Simons raised an outcry when she saw that her abode was to consist of a broad strip of rough felt cloth, folded in the middle, fixed by the ends into the ground and open to the wind on two sides. The man of Corfu declared that, barring

heavy rain or a high wind, we should be housed like princes.

The whole troop began to pitch the pickets, to bring coverings, and make our beds. Each bed consisted of a carpet covered with a big goat-skin. At about six o'clock the King came to assure himself that we had all we wanted. Mrs. Simons, more furious than ever, declared that she never had had such wretched accommodation in her whole life. I begged earnestly that all importunate visitors might be excluded, and the King issued a Draconian order to that effect, which, by the way, never was observed. Discipline is a term that has no Greek equivalent.

At seven his Majesty and his subjects withdrew, and our supper was then served. Four torches of resinous wood illumined the table. Their red and smoky light threw a curious shadow on Mary-Ann's pale face. Her eyes seemed to appear and disappear in their orbits, like the revolving fires of a light-house. Her voice, broken by fatigue, gave forth an extraordinary vibration. Listening to it, my mind wandered into a supernatural sphere, and I recalled to my memory a number of fantastic tales. A nightingale burst into song, and I fancied that its silvery notes were faintly echoed by Mary-Ann's lips.

The day had been trying for all of us, and I, who, as you know, can ply a good knife-and-fork, was longing rather for sleep than for food. So I wished the ladies a good-night and retired under my tent. Once there, I soon forgot the nightingale, our danger, the ransom, the fleas; closed my eyes, and slept the sleep of the just.

A frightful noise of shooting suddenly awoke me. I started up so quickly that I struck my head against one of the poles. At the same moment I heard the ladies' voices crying: "We are saved! Here are the police!"

I perceived two or three shapes running about in the indistinct light, and in my delight and confusion hugged the first man I came across—it was the little devil from Corfu!

"Halt!" cried he. "Where in Lucifer's name are you going, may I ask?"

"You vile thief!" I answered, wiping my lips. "I'm going to see if the carabineers will soon have finished shooting your companions."

"The carabineers do not travel to-day. It's the first of May and the Feast of the Ascension—a double holiday. The noise that you heard is the signal of the rejoicings. It is past midnight, and until the same hour to-morrow, our comrades will drink, eat meat, dance the 'Romaic,' and

amuse themselves by burning a quantity of powder. If you wish to look on at the sight, I should be pleased, for I'd rather watch over you within sight of a meal than here by this fountain."

"You lie!" said Mrs. Simons. "The police have come!"

"Let us go and see," said Mary-Ann.

I followed them. The noise was so great that it was useless to think of sleeping. Our guide led us through the King's office, and showed us the robbers' camp lighted up as if it were on fire. Burning pines were placed at equal distances. Five or six groups seated round the fire were roasting lambs spitted on staffs. In the middle of the crowd a long string of dancers wound slowly round to the noise of hideous music. Guns went off in all directions, and a ball whistled past within a few inches of my ear. I begged the ladies to hasten, thinking that near the King there would be less danger. Seated on his everlasting carpet, he presided at the amusements of his subjects. Around him, skins of wine were emptied like little bottles, and lambs cut up like partridges. Each guest took a leg or a shoulder, and carried it off with him. The orchestra was composed of a flat tambourine and a shrill flageolet. The dancers had taken off their shoes to be more at ease.

From time to time one left the dance, swallowed a cup of wine, gobbled a bit of meat, let off a gun, and returned to the ball. All, excepting the King, were drinking, eating, howling, and jumping, but not a smile was to be seen on any of their faces.

Hadji Stavros made profuse excuses for having disturbed us. "It is not my fault, but that of custom. Were the first of May to pass without gun-shots, my good men would not believe in the return of the spring. They are simple-minded beings, brought up in the country, and attached to its customs. I do what I can to civilize them, but shall die before I have succeeded. Men can't be recast in a day like silver spoons. In my time I also found pleasure in these coarse diversions; I danced and drank as they do now. Then I knew nothing of European civilization. Why did I, for my misfortune, begin to travel so late? I would give much to be young, to be fifty.

"I have dreams of reform, too, which will never be realized, for, like Alexander, I am without an heir worthy of me. Then, no one supports me. I ought to have the exact list of all the inhabitants of the kingdom, with the approximate value of their possessions, real and personal estate. As for the foreigners who come

here, there should be an agent in each port to inform me of their names, to tell me in which direction they intend to travel, and as far as possible the amount of their fortunes. In this way I should know exactly what every one is capable of giving, and not be exposed to ask too much or too little. I would establish on every road a staff of respectable employés, well-mannered, well-dressed; for why shock customers by a disagreeable appearance and ferocious looks? In France and England I have seen most distinguished-looking thieves; but their business was none the less prosperous for that.

"I would exact from all my subordinates perfect manners; above all in those specially charged with the capture of prisoners. For prisoners of distinction, such as yourselves, I would have comfortable rooms in good air, with gardens. And do not suppose that it would cost more; on the contrary!

"If all who travelled in the kingdom came into my hands, I could impose only an insignificant tax on the traveller. If every native and foreigner were to pay me but a quarter per cent. on the total of his fortune, I should gain on the number. Then brigandage would only be a tax on circulation: a just tax, for it would be propor-

tional : a normal one, for it has always been gathered since the heroic ages. We might even simplify it by accepting subscriptions. In virtue of a certain sum once paid, a safe-conduct might be obtained by the native, or a *visa* given to the passport of the foreigner.

" You'll say, perhaps, that according to the Constitution a tax can only be established by the vote of the two Houses. Ah ! my dear sir, if I had time I'd buy the Senate, and elect a Lower House devoted to me of my own. The law would be voted without discussion. I would create, if need were, a Ministry of the High Roads. On setting out, it might cost me altogether three or four millions ; but in a couple of years I should repay myself—and I'd keep the roads in repair into the bargain ! "

He sighed deeply, and added : " See what confidence I have in you—I tell you all my affairs. It is an old habit of which I never shall correct myself. I have always lived in the open, and acted above-board. Our profession would be disgraceful if we exercised it clandestinely. I hide nothing, and fear no one. When you read in the papers that I am being looked for, say boldly that it is untrue. They always know where I am. I am afraid neither of Ministers, army, nor the

courts. The Ministers know that if I make a sign I can change the Cabinet. The army is in my favour, and furnishes me with the recruits I need. I borrow soldiers from its ranks, and give it back officers. As for the Judges, they know the sentiments I entertain towards them. I do not esteem, but I pity them. Poor, and badly paid, one cannot expect them to be honest. I support some entirely, and assist others, or I feed some and clothe others; and, having hanged a few of them in the course of my life, I am in the good books of the magistracy."

With a superb gesture, he pointed to the sky, the sea, and the land. "All that is mine. All that breathes in the kingdom pays me homage —from fear, friendship, or admiration. I have caused many tears to flow; but there is not a mother in the land who would not be proud to have a son like Hadji Stavros. A day will come when learned men like yourself will write my history, and the isles of the Archipelago dispute the honour of having been the place of my birth. My portrait will be in the peasant's hut with the sacred images bought on Mount Athos. And when that time comes, my daughter's grandchildren, should they be princes, will speak with pride of their ancestor 'the King of the Mountains!'"

Perhaps you'll smile at my Teutonic simplicity, but I confess that this singular speech really moved me. In spite of myself, I admired this broad view of crime. Never yet had I met with so imposing a rascal. This devil of a man, who was going to cut my throat at the end of the month, almost inspired me with respect. His large marble-like face, calm in the midst of the orgy, resembled the inflexible mask of Fate. I couldn't help saying to him: "You are really a King!"

"No doubt of it, since I find flatterers even among my enemies. Don't defend yourself! I know how to read faces, and this morning you would willingly have seen me hanged!"

"Since you allow me to be frank, I admit that I was much provoked. You have asked from me a quite unreasonable sum as a ransom. That you exact four thousand pounds from these ladies, who are rich, is comprehensible, and forms part of your trade, but to ask six hundred pounds from me, who have nothing, is a thing I cannot understand."

"Nevertheless, nothing is more simple. All foreigners who come to our country are rich, for the journey costs dear. You tell me, and I believe you, that you do not travel at your own

expense, but those who sent you here can't give you much under two hundred pounds a year. If they spend this money, they have their reasons. Nothing is given for nothing. You, therefore, represent in their eyes a capital of some three thousand pounds or so, and to get you back for six hundred is a good stroke of business."

"But the establishment that pays me has no capital: only an uncertain income. The budget of the Botanical Gardens is voted each year by the Senate: its resources are limited. Such a case never has been foreseen. I can't explain to you—you would not understand——"

"And if I did," he replied in a haughty tone, "do you believe that I would ever go back on what I have said? My words are laws, and if I wish them to be respected, I must respect them myself. I have the right to be unjust, but not that to be weak. My injustice only does harm to others, weakness would ruin myself. If it were known that I ever rescind a decision, my prisoners would try and find prayers to soften and not money to pay me. I am not one of your European brigands, who mingle rigour with generosity, speculation with imprudence; who are cruel without reason, and soft without excuse, finishing by a miserable death on the scaffold. I

have declared before witnesses that I will have six hundred pounds, or your head. The rest is your affair; but in one way or another I shall be paid. Listen. In 1854 I condemned two little girls, who were just of the age of my dear Photini. They stretched out their arms to me, weeping bitterly, and their cries made my heart bleed. Vasili's hand trembled so, that it was some time before he could kill them. Yet, I was inflexible, because the ransom was not paid. Do you think, after that, I am likely to make an exception in your favour? What would have been the use of killing the poor things, if it were known that I let you go scot free?"

I bent my head without a word. I was a thousand times right, but what could I oppose to the pitiless logic of the old savage? He drew me from my reflections by a friendly tap on the shoulder.

"Don't lose courage, young man; I've seen death much nearer than you, and am here to tell the tale. During the War of Independence, Ibrahim set seven Egyptians to shoot me. Six of their balls went astray. The seventh struck me in the forehead without hurting me, and when the Turks went to take up my corpse, I had disappeared in the midst of the smoke. You have, perhaps, longer to live than you think. Write to all your friends

in Hamburg. You have received an education. As doctor you must have friends good for six hundred pounds. Sincerely I hope so. I don't hate you ; you've done me no harm ; your death would give me no pleasure, and I trust you will find means to pay me in money. Meanwhile, go, and rest with the ladies. My people have drank somewhat too much, and they are looking at the Englishwomen in a way that promises badly. The poor devils are condemned to an austere life, and they are not seventy like me. Usually, I master them by fatigue ; but an hour hence, if the young lady remains there, I cannot answer for the consequence."

It was true : a threatening circle was forming round Mary-Ann, who examined the strange faces with innocent curiosity. The brigands, seated before her, whispered loudly to each other, making flattering remarks about her which happily she did not understand. The Corfiote, who had made up for lost time, offered her a cup of wine, which she pushed back roughly, thus causing it to fall on some of her neighbours. Five or six drunkards, more excited than the others, pushed each other, and exchanged blows as if to encourage themselves to go farther. I made a sign to Mrs. Simons, who rose with her daughter. But, the moment I offered

my arm to Mary-Ann, Vasili, his face red as the setting sun, staggered forward, and tried to put his arm round her waist. At this sight, the blood flew to my head, and I lost all control over myself. I jumped towards the brute, and had my ten fingers round his throat in a trice. He carried his hand to his waist and tried to get hold of his knife; but before he managed it, he was snatched from my hands and hurled on the ground by the powerful arm of the King. A murmur of disapprobation was heard in the assembly. Hadji raised his voice and cried: "Silence! show that you are Hellenes, and not men from Albania!" Then he said to me: "Best be off quickly, my young German friend: tell the ladies I will sleep at the door of their tent."

He left with us, preceded by his chiboukji, who never quitted him. Two or three drunkards tried to follow, but he pushed them back violently. We had not gone a hundred steps out of the crowd when a ball came whistling in the midst of us. The old Palikar did not even condescend to turn his head. He looked at me with a smile, and said in a half-whisper: "One must be indulgent, it is Ascension Day." On the road I took advantage of the Corfiote's state to ask Mrs. Simons for a private interview. "I have an impor-

VASILI STAGGERED FORWARD, AND TRIED TO PUT HIS ARM ROUND HER WAIST

tant secret to tell you," said I ; "allow me to slip into your tent while our spy is sleeping as soundly as Noah."

Whether this biblical comparison displeased her, I know not, but she answered dryly that she had no secrets to share with me. I insisted, but she remained obdurate. At last I told her that I had found the means of saving us all without spending a penny. She looked at me with distrust, but after consulting her daughter, consented to see me. Hadji favoured our rendezvous by keeping the man of Corfu with him. He had his carpet brought to the top of the rustic stair that led to our camping-place, placed his arms within reach of his hand, made the chiboukji (pipe-bearer) lie down at his left, the Corfiote at his right side, and wished us "happy dreams." I remained prudently in my tent until two or three loud snores assured me that our guardians were asleep. The sound of the revelry gradually died away. Two or three tardy shots disturbed from time to time the silence of the night. Our friend, the nightingale, continued his interrupted song. I crept along the trees to Mrs. Simons's tent. The mother and daughter awaited me seated on the damp grass. English custom prevented them from receiving me in what served as their bedroom.

"Pray say what you have to say quickly," were the words with which Mrs. Simons received me. "You must be aware that we need rest."

"Ladies, what I've come to tell you is well worth the sacrifice of an hour's sleep. Do you wish to be free in three days?"

"Why, sir, we shall be so to-morrow, or England will no longer be England! Dimitrius must have seen my brother. The latter certainly saw our Minister at dinner-time. Orders already have been given. The police are on the road, and whatever the Corfiote may say to the contrary, we shall be at liberty by breakfast-time to-morrow."

"Don't let us delude ourselves: time presses. I don't count on the police; our masters are evidently in no fear of them. I have always heard that in this country the hunter and his game, the police and the brigands, agree very well together. I admit that some men may be sent to our aid. Hadji will see them coming, and we shall be taken away by some lonely path to another of his numerous dens. He knows the country thoroughly; the rocks are his accomplices, the shrubs his allies, and the ravines his hiding-places. Parnassus is with him, and against us. He is 'King of the Mountains!' Hadji Stavros."

"Bravo, sir! Hadji Stavros is Allah, and you

are his Prophet! He would be touched to hear you speak of him in such flattering terms. I had already guessed that you were his friend, in seeing him tap you on the shoulder and speak to you so confidentially. Perhaps he has suggested the project of invasion you propose to us?"

"Yes, madam, you are right! His correspondence did. I discovered this morning, while he was dictating it, an infallible means of freeing ourselves without having a penny of ransom to pay. Pray write to your brother to get together £4600, four thousand for your ransom, six hundred for mine, and let him send the sum here by a sure hand—by Dimitrius."

"By your friend Dimitrius to your friend the Mountain King! Very many thanks, dear sir! This then is how we shall be freed for nothing."

"But Dimitrius is not my friend, and Hadji would not have the least hesitation in cutting my throat. But let me proceed. In exchange for the money you will get a receipt from the King."

"An excellent guarantee that will be!"

"With this you will get back your money to the last farthing, and I'll tell you how."

"Good-night, Mr. Schultz. Don't take the trouble of saying another word. Since we arrived in this charming country, we have been

robbed on all sides. At the Piræus, the customs people robbed us; the coachman who drove us to Athens did the same; ditto the inn-keeper; our guide, who is not your friend, threw us into the hands of the brigands. We met with a respectable monk who shared our spoils with the thieves. All those gentlemen drinking up there are thieves, as are also the men who sleep at our door to protect us, and you are the only honest person we have met in Greece; your advice, the best in the world! Good-night, sir! good-night!"

"But, for heaven's sake, madam! If I don't justify myself, think what you like of me. Let me only tell you how you will get back your money."

"And how in the world shall I get it back when all the police in the kingdom can't get *us* back? Is Hadji no longer the King of the Mountains? He doesn't know the secluded roads? The ravines, the bushes, the rocks are no longer his hiding-places and his accomplices? Good-night, sir! I'll bear testimony to your zeal, and tell the brigands that you have done their commission thoroughly. Once for all, good-night!"

The worthy lady pushed me by the shoulders, and cried "Good-night!" in such a shrill voice,

that I was alarmed lest she should awake our jailers; and flew from the tent.

What a day, my dear sir! I tried to recapitulate all the mishaps that had fallen upon my devoted head since I left Athens in search of the *Borgana variabilis*. My meeting with the Englishwomen—Mary-Ann's beautiful eyes—the brigand's guns—the fleas—Hadji—the six hundred pounds to be paid—the price placed on my life—the orgy of Ascension Day—the balls whistling by our ears—the drunken face of Vasili—and, to crown all, the abominable injustice of Mrs. Simons! Surely to be taken myself for a thief was the last straw after so many trials! And Sleep, the all-powerful Consoler, would not obey my bidding. I was over-wrought, and could not sleep.

In the midst of my painful reflections day broke. With languid eyes I watched the sun rising over the horizon. Little by little confused noises succeeded to the silence of the night. I had neither the courage to look at my watch, nor at what was around me. My senses were stupefied by fatigue and discouragement. I believe that if they had rolled me down to the bottom of the mountain, I could not have put out a hand to save myself. In this prostration of my faculties, came a vision that was half dream, half hallucination,

for I was neither awake nor asleep, my eyes were neither open nor closed. It seemed to me that I had been buried alive, that my felt tent was a black pall covered with flowers, and that the prayers for the dead were being chanted over me. I was frightened and tried to cry out, but my tongue stuck in my throat. I heard distinctly enough the words and responses to know that the funeral service was being said in Greek. Making a violent effort to move my right arm, I found it as heavy as lead, but the left one was as usual. Then some one passed by the tent and let fall what looked like a bunch of flowers. I rubbed my eyes, sat up, examined them, and in their midst found a superb specimen of the *Borgana variabilis*.

I was not mistaken! I touched its gamosepalous calyx, its shell-like leaves, its corolla formed of five oblique petals united at the base by a staminal filament, its ten stamina, its ovary containing five little cavities; in short, I held in my hand the queen of the malvaceous tribe of plants! But by what chance had it fallen on the floor of my tomb? —and how was I to send it to Hamburg? At this moment a sharp pain drew my attention to my right arm. One would have thought it was being devoured by a host of invisible insects. However, I shook it with the left hand, and it

soon became all right. I had been lying with my head on it for hours, and that of course had numbed it. I *was* still alive then, for pain is one of the signs of life! But what then meant the funeral chant that kept on buzzing in my ears? I got up. Our apartment was in the same state as the previous evening, and the ladies were sleeping soundly.

A large bouquet like mine hung at the entrance to their tent, and I at length remembered that the Greeks decorate all their habitations with flowers on the first of May. These bouquets and the *Borgana variabilis* were proofs of the King's generosity. But the funeral chant was not accounted for. I went up the steps leading to Hadji's cabinet, and saw a spectacle more curious than any I had hitherto beheld. An altar was set up under the royal pine-tree. The monk in splendid vestments was celebrating the Divine sacrifice with imposing pomp. Our drunkards of the night before, some standing, others kneeling in the dust, all with uncovered heads, were transformed into so many saints. They either kissed devoutly a painted wooden image, or made repeated signs of the Cross, the more fervent touching the earth with their foreheads, while their long hair swept the ground. The King's chiboukji

went round with a small tray crying: "Give! give! He who gives to the Church lends to God!" And the money came in abundance, the sound of the tinkling copper pieces falling on the tray, accompanying the voice of the priest, and the prayers of the worshippers. When I entered the circle of the faithful, each one saluted me with discreet cordiality as in the primitive ages of the Church.

Hadji Stavros, standing near the altar, made room for me by his side. In his hand he held a large book, and judge of my surprise when I heard him chant the lessons lustily! The brigand was officiating! In his youth he had received the second of the minor orders, and was reader or "antagnost." One degree higher, and he would have been exorcist, invested with power to drive away evil spirits! I assure you, my dear sir, that I am not easily surprised, and practise successfully the "nil admirari," but I was simply amazed on beholding this extraordinary sight. Seeing the prostrations, hearing these prayers, one might have thought the worship of these men slightly tinged with idolatry. Their faith appeared ardent, their conviction profound, but I, who had seen them at work, and knew how un-Christian-like were their actions, could but ask myself: "Who is being de-

ceived here?" The service lasted until a few minutes past twelve. An hour later the altar had disappeared, the brigands had returned to their carousal, the "good old man" keeping them company.

Hadji took me aside, and asked me if I had written? I promised to do so at once, and he ordered them to give me reeds, ink, and paper. I wrote to John Harris, Christodulos, and my father. I begged my former host to intercede for me with his old comrade, to tell him how incapable I was of finding six hundred pounds. I appealed to the courage and imagination of Harris, who was not the man to leave a friend in the lurch. "If any one can save me, it is you. I don't know how you'll set about it, but have full faith in you, who are capable of anything. I do not suppose you'll find six hundred pounds to get me back. They would have to be borrowed from M. Mérinay, who does not lend. Besides, you are too much of a Yankee to make that kind of a bargain. Do what you like. Set fire to the four corners of the country if you please. I approve everything beforehand, but don't lose time. I feel my head weak, and am not sure that I can hold out until the end of the month."

I took good care not to let poor father know

the wretched plight in which I found myself. Why drive him to despair by telling him of dangers that he could do nothing to avert? I wrote as I did on the first of every month, that I was well, and hoped that my letter would find the family in good health. I added that I was travelling in the mountains, that I had discovered the *Borgana variabilis*, and also a young Englishwoman, richer and more beautiful than the Princess Ypsoff. I had not yet inspired her with any affection, for lack of opportunity, but that I might perhaps soon render her a great service, or show myself to her in Uncle Rosenthaler's coat. "Nevertheless," added I sadly, "who knows if I shall not die a bachelor? In this case, Fritz or Jean-Nicholas must make a fortune for you all. My health is better than ever, and my strength has not in the least given way, but Greece is a treacherous country, which tries the most vigorous of constitutions. If I am condemned never to see Germany again, to die here, from some unforeseen cause, at the end of my journey and my work, believe, dear and excellent father, that my last regret will be that I quit life so far from my family, and that my last thought will be for you."

Hadji passed by at the moment I was drying

a tear, and I fancy that this sign of weakness considerably lowered me in his esteem.

"Cheer up!" said he. "Courage! It is not yet time to weep about yourself. Devil take me! if one would not think you were following your own funeral! The English lady has just written a letter of eight pages without shedding a tear. Go, and keep her company a little, she wants some diversion. Ah! if you were a man of my stamp! I swear to you that at your age I would not have remained long a prisoner. My ransom would have been paid in a couple of days, and I know well who would have given the money? You're not married?"

"No!"

"Well! don't you understand, then? Go back to your tent and make yourself agreeable. I offer you an excellent opportunity of making your fortune. If you do not take advantage of it, you'll be an idiot, and if you do not count me among your benefactors, you have no sense of gratitude!"

I found the ladies seated near the spring. While waiting for the promised lady's-maid, they were mending their habits themselves. The brigands had given them thread, or rather twine, and needles big enough to stitch sail-cloth with. At

intervals they interrupted their work to cast a melancholy glance towards Athens. It was hard to see the town so near, and not to be able to reach it without paying four thousand pounds! I inquired how they had slept, and the extreme coolness of the tone in which I was answered proved that they did not care to speak to me. At this moment I remarked for the first time Mary-Ann's hair. She was bareheaded, and after a long bath in the stream was drying her long tresses in the sun. I never should have thought that one woman could have had such a mass of silky curls. Her long hair hung over her shoulders, but not in the stupid, straight, dripping manner that is usual with that of women when they come from the bath. It twisted itself into wavy little curls, like the surface of a small lake agitated by the wind. The light passing through this charming tangle gave it a soft silky look, and her face, thus framed, was exactly like a moss-rose.

I have told you, my dear sir, that I never have been in love, and clearly I would not have begun by loving a girl who mistook me for a thief. But I confess, that at the price of my life I would have saved this lovely hair from the clutch of Hadji's claws. There and then I imagined a plan of escape, daring, but not impossible.

Our dwelling had two outlets: it looked out upon the King's cabinet and the precipice. To escape by the first was absurd. The robber's camp, and the second line of defence, guarded by the dogs, would have to be crossed. There remained the precipice. Over the abyss, I perceived that the almost perpendicular rock offered irregularities of surface, small tufts of herbs, stunted bushes, and other objects that rendered a descent possible. The danger on this side came from the cascade. The stream that issued from our dwelling formed on the mountain-side a slippery sheet of water. Besides, it was not easy to be collected, and to climb down properly with such a shower-bath on one's head. But was there not a way of turning the torrent aside? Perhaps. Examining it nearer the place in which we were lodged, I perceived the water had been there before us. Our room was but a dried-up pond. I took up a corner of the carpet that grew under our feet, and discovered a thick sediment deposited by the dried-up water. At one time, whether one of the frequent earthquakes of the country had broken the dyke, or a vein of rock softer than the others had given a passage to the water, the whole liquid mass had been forced out of its bed. A canal, ten feet long and three wide, car-

ried it to the back of the mountain. To shut this dam, open for years, and imprison the waters in the first reservoir, would be the work of a couple of hours. One would suffice to allow time for the humidity to drain off the rocks, and the night breeze would soon dry our road. Our flight thus prepared would not have taken me more than twenty-five minutes. Once arrived at the base of the mountain, Athens was before us, and the stars would be our guide. True, the roads were infamous, but there was no chance of meeting a brigand. When the King came in the morning to ask how we had passed the night, he would find that we had spent it in taking ourselves off; and as it is never too late to learn, would realize that a cascade is a bad jailer.

The plan seemed to me so marvellous, that I immediately told it to the lady who had inspired it. She listened at first suspiciously, just as conspirators do to a person they think a spy. But Mary-Ann examined the precipice.

"One could get down, but with the help only of a strong arm. Are you very strong, Mr. Schultz?"

I answered ingenuously: "I should be, if you would but have confidence in me."

These words, to which I did not attach any

particular importance, seemed to embarrass her, for she blushed and turned away her head.

"Perhaps we have been unjust to you. I should be pleased to believe you to be an honest man."

She certainly might have said something pleasanter than that; but she paid me this doubtful compliment in so sweet a voice, and looked so charming, that I was moved to the bottom of my soul. So true is it that manner is everything.

She held out her pretty hand, and I was on the point of seizing it, when suddenly she changed her mind, and tapping her forehead asked: "But where are the materials for a dyke?"

"Underneath our feet: the sod!"

"The water will carry it away."

"Not in less than two hours, and when we are gone, let come what will."

"Good!" And this time she gave me her hand, and I was carrying it to my lips, when the capricious creature drew it quickly back, saying: "But we are watched night and day; have you thought of that?"

I had not for the moment, but I had gone too far to withdraw, and answered with a resolution that surprised me: "The Corfiote? I'll take care of him, and tie him to a tree."

"But he'll call out."

"Then I'll kill him."

"And how are we to get arms?"

"I'll steal them!"

To kill, steal, and the rest, seemed to me quite simple since I had nearly kissed her hand. Just imagine what I should be capable of if ever I fell in love!

Mrs. Simons listened with a certain tolerance, and I fancied that she gave some signs of approbation.

"Dear sir," she began, "your second idea is decidedly better than your first—much better. I never would have condescended to pay a ransom even with the certainty of getting it back again. So, tell me again, please, what you mean to do to save us."

"I'll answer for anything, madam. To-day I'll get a dagger somehow. Our brigands go to sleep early, and are sure to sleep soundly. I'll get up at ten, bind, gag, and, if need be, kill our keeper. That's not a murder, but an execution; he has deserved twenty deaths instead of one. At half-past ten I'll dig up fifty square feet of sod; you'll carry it to the stream; I'll make the dyke. Total, an hour and a half, and it will be midnight. We'll work together to strengthen our

dyke, while the wind will be drying up our road. At one o'clock I'll take your daughter on my left arm; we'll slide down the crevice, and, catching hold of the tufts of herbs, will reach yon wild fig-tree. Then rest a little under the green oak, and after climbing along that point to the group of red rocks, we shall be saved."

"Very good. And what about me?"

This "me" fell on my enthusiasm like a pail of iced water. One can't think of everything, and I had utterly forgotten Mrs. Simons! Impossible to return for her. To ascend the rock without ladders was not to be thought of. The good lady perceived my confusion, and said with a tone more compassionate than reproachful: "My dear sir, you see that romantic plans have always a weak point. Allow me to count only upon my first idea, and expect the carabineers. I'm English, and have an old habit of believing in the arm of the law. Besides, I know the Athenian carabineers. They are splendid men, and quite clean—for Greeks. They have long moustaches and percussion guns. It will, if you please, be their business to get me away from here."

The Corfiote approached opportunely to allow me to dispense with an answer. He brought the lady's-maid. She was an Albanian, good-looking

in spite of her pug nose. Two brigands roaming the mountain carried her off in all her Sunday best, while she was walking between her mother and her *fiancé*. She shrieked in a way that might have melted a stone, but soon consoled herself with a promise of payment, and her liberty in fifteen days. Thus reassured, she almost rejoiced in a misfortune that was to increase her marriage portion. Happy country, in which the wounds of the heart can be cured by five-franc pieces! This philosophical servant was not very useful to Mrs. Simons, since all she knew of women's work was the culture of the fields. She rendered my life insupportable because she was always chewing a bit of garlic, just as the Hamburg ladies munch sweetmeats. The day ended peaceably, but the next one seemed interminable. The Corfiote did not let us out of his sight. The ladies were always looking for the carabineers, but in vain. I, who am accustomed to an active life, was fretting terribly in this idleness. True, I might have herborized, under safe escort, but a certain something kept me near Mrs. Simons and her daughter.

At night I slept badly; I was always thinking of my project of flight. I had remarked the place where the Corfiote placed his dagger before going

to sleep, but thought it treachery to escape without Mary-Ann.

On the Saturday morning, between five and six o'clock, there was a great noise near the King's study. I was soon dressed, for I still wore my clothes. Hadji was standing in the midst of his band presiding at a tumultuous council. All the brigands were armed to the teeth. Ten or twelve coffers I never had seen before were placed on litters. I guessed that they contained the baggage, and that our masters were preparing for a move.

The Corfiote, Vasili, and Sophocles were vociferating at the top of their voices, and talking all together. Suddenly the advanced sentinels began to bark. A courier in rags rushed towards the King, yelling out: "The carabineers!"

CHAPTER V

THE CARABINEERS

The King did not seem much discomfited; but his eyebrows were drawn closer together than usual, and the wrinkles in his forehead formed an acute angle between the eyes. He asked the new arrival: "Which way are they coming?"

"By Castia."

"How many companies?"

"One."

"Which?"

"I don't know."

"We shall see."

A second messenger arrived in haste to give the alarm. Hadji Stavros called out as soon as he saw him: "Is it the company of Pericles?"

The brigand answered: "I can't say: you know I can't read the numbers."

A shot was heard in the distance.

"Hist!" said the King, drawing out his watch, and complete silence was established. Four more

shots were heard at intervals of a minute between each. The last was followed by a violent detonation like a volley. Hadji smiled and put back his watch into his pocket.

"All's well! Take the baggage to the dépôt, and send us some wine of Ægina. It is the company of Pericles!" As he was finishing his sentence, he perceived me in my corner, and said in a nasty jeering tone: "Come along, my young friend. It's good to get up early. One sees curious things. Are you thirsty? If so, you'll drink a glass of famous wine with our brave carabineers!"

Five minutes later appeared three enormous skins full of wine taken from some hiding-place, and a tardy sentinel announced:

"Good news! They are Pericles' carabineers!"

Some of the brigands hastened to meet the troop. The Corfiote, always a ready speaker, ran to harangue their Captain. Soon we heard the sound of a drum. Then we saw the blue flag, and sixty well-armed men passed on in double file to the King's cabinet. I remembered having seen and admired Pericles in Athens. He was a young officer of thirty-five or so; dark, well-built, a favourite of the ladies, a leader of the cotillon at

Court, and he wore his tin epaulettes with a considerable amount of grace.

He sheathed his sword, ran to the King, and embraced him on the lips, crying, "Good-day, godfather!"

"Good-day, my boy," answered the King, stroking the young fellow's cheek with the back of his hand. "You've been quite well?"

"Thanks: and you?"

"As you see: and the family?"

"My uncle the Bishop has the fever."

"Send him to me up here, I'll cure him. The director of police is better?"

"A little. He begs to be remembered; the Prime Minister ditto."

"Anything new?"

"A ball at the Palace on the fifteenth, sure. The *Century* has announced it."

"You still dance then? And what's going on on 'Change?"

"There's a general fall."

"Bravo! Any letters for me?"

"Yes; here they are. Photini's wasn't ready; she'll write by post."

"A glass of wine—to your health, my son!"

"The same to you, godfather. Who is the foreigner listening to us?"

"No one in particular; a German without importance. Can't you give us a hint for one of our expeditions?"

"The Paymaster-General is sending eight hundred pounds to Argos. To-morrow evening the convoy will pass the Scironian rocks."

"I'll be there. Must I take many men?"

"Yes; the treasure-chest is escorted by two companies."

"Good or bad?"

"Could not be worse. They'll fight to the last."

"I'll take all my people. And in my absence you'll have charge of our prisoners."

"With pleasure. While we are on that subject, I've most strict orders. Your Englishwomen have written to their Ambassador, and call the whole army to their aid."

"And to think that I furnished them with the paper! Trust people after that!"

"I must make my report accordingly. I'll talk of a desperate fight."

"We'll draw it up together."

"Yes. This time, godfather, I must win."

"No!"

"But I say, yes! I want to be decorated."

"You'll be so one day. You're never satisfied. Only a year since I made you Captain!"

"Listen to reason, godfather. It's to your interest to be beaten. Once it is known that your band is dispersed, confidence will return; travellers will take to the road again, and you'll coin gold."

"That's all very well, but if I'm beaten, prices will rise, and I've played for the fall."

"Oh! that's another affair! Let me at least kill a dozen or so of your men."

"All right. That will hurt no one, and I must finish off ten of yours."

"How? On my return it will be seen that the company is complete."

"Not at all. You'll leave them here; I want recruits."

"In that case, I commend you little Spiro, my adjutant. He was at the Euelpides school; he has studied, and is intelligent. The poor fellow earns less than three pounds a month, and his people are not rich. If he remains in the army, he'll not be second lieutenant before five or six years, the lists are so full. But if he distinguishes himself in your troop, they'll try to bribe him, and he will be promoted in six months."

"All right! I'll take little Spiro. Does he know French?"

"Pretty well."

"I'll keep him, perhaps. If he suits me, I might give him an interest in the business. You'll hand our yearly accounts to the right person. I pay 82 per cent."

"That's good. My eight shares will have brought me in more than my Captain's pay! Ah! godfather, what a wretched trade is mine!"

"Well, it's too late to change now. You would have been a brigand but for your mother's prejudices. She declared you were not fit for the calling. To your good health!—and to yours!" (turning to me). "Let me introduce my godson, Captain Pericles, a thoroughly good fellow, who knows several languages, and who will be so kind as to replace me during my absence. My dear Pericles, I introduce this gentleman to you. He is a doctor, and worth £600. Can you believe that, celebrated doctor though he may be, he has not yet found means to make the Englishwomen pay his ransom? Ah! my son, the world is degenerating; in my time it was very different!"

He rose quickly, and proceeded to give some orders before leaving. Was it joy at the prospect of a campaign, or satisfaction at seeing his godson? Who can tell? But he looked twenty years younger, laughed, joked, and forgetting his royalty, behaved like a simple mortal. I never

should have supposed that the arrival of a troop of police could have cheered up a brigand, but so it was. Sophocles, Vasili, the Corfiote, and others in authority, communicated to the camp the orders of the King. Thanks to the alarm of the morning, all were ready for the start. Spiro, the young adjutant, and the nine other men chosen from the carabineers, exchanged their uniforms for the picturesque costume of the brigands. It was a regular transformation scene. If the War Minister had been there, he would have been none the wiser, so cleverly was it managed. The new brigands did not regret the exchange, and the only grumblers were those who remained under the flag. Two or three veterans declared that favour was shown, and not sufficient consideration paid to seniority. Others boasted of their services, and declared they had already engaged in brigandage. The Captain soothed them as best he could, with the assurance that their turn would come. Before leaving, Hadji gave up his keys to his deputy. He showed him the grotto that served as cellar, the cave where the flour was kept, the crevice devoted to the cheeses, and the trunk of the tree that held the coffee. He also spoke of the precautions necessary to prevent our escape, and thereby secure what represented a valu-

able capital. Handsome Pericles answered smilingly: "What are you afraid of? Am I not a shareholder?"

At seven the next morning the King marched off. The entire band took a northerly course turning their backs on the Scironian rocks. They came back by a long but rather good road, to the bottom of the ravine, underneath the place where our tents were pitched. The men sang loudly while they were treading the water of the cascade. Their warlike air was a song in four stanzas, recalling one of Hadji's youthful and unedifying exploits:

> "Down to the plain came the black-eyed Klepht,
> His burnished gun, etc., etc."

You must know the air; Athenian street-arabs are always humming it. Mrs. Simons, sleeping near her daughter, and dreaming of carabineers as usual, woke up with a start and ran to the window—that is, to the cascade. She was cruelly disabused by seeing only enemies, when she had hoped for saviours. There were the King, the Corfiote, and other too-familiar figures. What surprised her the most was the number that took part in this matinal expedition. She counted sixty men in the suite of Hadji Stavros.

"Sixty!" thought she; "then only twenty

remain to watch us!" The idea of an escape, which she had a few hours earlier refused to entertain, came back to her vividly. In the midst of her reflections, she saw a rear-guard, upon which she had not counted. Sixteen—eighteen—twenty men! Then there was no one in the camp! She was free!

"Mary-Ann!" cried she, while the men continued to defile. There were eighty brigands in all, and ninety were marching past! A dozen dogs closed the march, but she didn't take the trouble to count them.

At the sound of her mother's voice Mary-Ann ran out of the tent.

"Free!" cried Mrs. Simons. "They're all gone! All! even more than we've seen. Let us leave at once, my child!"

They ran to the steps and saw the King's camp occupied by the carabineers. The Greek flag waved triumphantly from the top of a pine-tree. Hadji's place was taken by M. Pericles. Mrs. Simons rushed towards him with such vivacity that he with difficulty avoided an embrace.

"Merciful heavens!—the brigands are then gone!"

The Captain replied in English: "Yes, madam!"

"You have driven them away?"

"It is certain, madam, that were it not for us they would still be here."

"Thank God! The fight must have been terrible?"

"Not so much as you might suppose. I had but to say a word."

"And we are free?"

"Absolutely!"

"To return to Athens?"

"When you please."

"Then let us leave at once."

"Quite impossible for the moment."

"What is there to keep us here?"

"Our duty as conquerors—we guard the battle-field."

"Mary-Ann, shake hands with this gentleman."

The young girl obeyed.

"Sir," said Mrs. Simons, "heaven has sent you to us. We had lost all hope. Our only defender was a young middle-class German, a scientist, who goes about herborizing, and made the most ridiculous plans for our escape. But now, you have come! I was quite sure the police would save us: wasn't I, Mary-Ann?"

"Yes, mother."

"Let me tell you that these brigands are the

vilest wretches. They began by taking away all we had."

"All?" asked the Captain.

"Except my watch: that I took good care to hide."

"Quite right, madam. And did they keep what they took from you?"

"No; they gave us back twelve pounds, a silver dressing-case, and my daughter's watch."

"These articles are still in your possession?"

"Of course."

"Did they take your rings and ear-rings?"

"No, Captain."

"Be so good as to give them to me."

"To give you what?"

"Your rings, silver dressing-case, ear-rings, two watches, and twelve pounds."

Mrs. Simons cried out indignantly: "What! you want to take what the brigands restored us?"

With much dignity the Captain replied: "Madam, I'm only doing my duty."

"Is it your duty to plunder us?"

"My duty is to collect all proofs necessary for the prosecution of Hadji Stavros."

"He will be tried?"

"As soon as we take him."

"It seems to me that you've no need of our

jewels and money. You've sufficient proofs to hang him twenty times over. Besides, he has taken two Englishwomen prisoners: what more is wanted?"

"Judicial forms must be observed, madam."

"My dear sir, among the things you ask for there are some I prize."

"The greater reason for trusting them to me."

"But if I've no watch, I shall never know——"

"Madam, I shall always be pleased to tell you the hour."

In her turn Mary-Ann said that she was most unwilling to part with her ear-rings.

"Mademoiselle," replied the gallant Captain, "beauty such as yours requires no adornment. It has nothing to gain from jewels, however fine."

"You're very good, but my silver dressing-case is indispensable to me—I can't do without it."

"From your point of view, you are more than right. But do not, I beg, insist upon this head; it would only double the regret I already feel in depriving two persons of such distinction of what they wish to keep. Alas! we soldiers are slaves of our orders, instruments of the law, men of duty. Pray take my arm, and let me have the honour of leading you back to your tent. There, if you allow me, we'll begin to make our inventory."

I had not lost a word of this dialogue, and managed to contain myself until the end. But when I saw this vile rogue of a police-officer give his arm to Mary-Ann, in order to rob her politely, I boiled over, and, going straight to him, meant to tell him a piece of my mind.

He must have read in my eyes what I intended to say, for he darted at me a threatening look, left the ladies on the stair leading to their abode, placed a sentinel at the door, and returned to me, saying: "Now, if you please."

He took me, without saying a word, to the other side of the King's cabinet, posted himself before me, and looked me straight in the face.

"You understand English, sir?"

I replied in the affirmative.

"Greek also?"

"Yes."

"Ah! you know a good deal too much. Fancy my godfather amusing himself in talking of his private affairs before you! As for his own, I don't mind. He is King, and therefore his own master. But, the devil!—put yourself in my place. My position is extremely delicate, and I have a number of things to consider. I'm not rich, and have to depend on my pay, the esteem of my superiors,

and the friendship of the brigands. The indiscretion of a traveller might cost me two-thirds of my income."

"And you imagine that I shall keep your infamy secret!"

"When I imagine anything, it generally comes to pass. I don't know whether you'll leave this country alive, or whether your ransom will be paid. If my godfather cuts your throat, I shall be sure of your silence. If, on the contrary, you return to Athens, I advise you as a friend never to speak of what you have seen. Imitate the discretion of the Duchess of Piacenza, who was captured by Bibichi, and died ten years later without even having said a word as to the details of her adventure. Do you know a proverb that says, 'The tongue is the enemy of the head'? Reflect upon it seriously, and don't put yourself in a position to verify its truth."

"Threats——"

"I don't threaten. I'm too well bred to do so; but I warn you. If you talk, I shall not be the one to revenge myself. But all the men of my company worship their Captain. They espouse my interests warmly, and would prove, to my regret, pitiless to the fellow who should get me into trouble."

"Having so many accomplices, why need you be afraid?"

"I fear nothing from the Greeks, and, at any ordinary time, I would insist less strongly on this advice. True, we have among our superiors some madmen that pretend that brigands ought to be treated in the same way as Turks; but if the affair passed between ourselves, I should also find energetic defenders. The misfortune is that diplomacy might think proper to interfere, and a foreign occupation would not be favourable to my cause. You have not an idea as to what you would be exposed if anything happened to me! You can't take four steps without meeting a carabineer. They guard the road from Athens to the Piræus, and—an accident soon happens!"

"Very good, sir. I'll think of it."

"You promise me secrecy?"

"You have no right to ask, and I, no intention to promise you anything. I note that you have warned me as to the danger of indiscretion. I shall keep the warning in mind."

"When you return to Germany, you can do what you like. Speak, write, publish, I shan't care. Works written against us harm no one, unless perhaps their authors. You are free to try the experiment. If you describe faithfully what

you've seen, you'll be accused of slandering an illustrious and oppressed race. Our friends, and most men of sixty are of the number, will tax you with levity, caprice, and even ingratitude. You will be reminded that you were my guest and Hadji's, and you will be accused of having violated the sacred laws of hospitality. But the best of the affair is, no one will believe you. The public only credits plausible lies. Try to persuade the good people of Paris, London, and Berlin, that you saw a captain of carabineers embrace a brigand chief! A company of a crack regiment guard the prisoners of the Hadji Stavros in order to give him the time to carry off the army-chest! The highest functionaries of the State found a limited company to plunder travellers! You might as well tell them that the mice of Attica have made an alliance with the cats, and that our lambs seek their food in the jaws of the wolf! Do you know what protects us from the displeasure of Europe? It is the improbability of our manner of life. Happily for us, all that is written against us seems improbable—impossible. I could tell you of a little book not at all in our favour, although true from start to finish. It has been a little read everywhere. In Paris, it was thought curious, but only seemed credible in one place—Athens! I do not

forbid you to add another volume to it, but you would better wait until you leave us, otherwise your last page might be stained with blood."

"But if anything comes out before my departure, how will you know that it is through me?"

"You alone are aware of my secret. The Englishwomen are persuaded that I am saving them from Hadji, and I intend to keep up the illusion until the King's return. It's an affair of two or three days at the most. We are forty furlongs, about sixty miles, from the Scironian rocks: our friends will be there some time to-night. To-morrow evening their affair will come off, and conquerors or conquered, Monday will see them here again. It will be easy to make the prisoners believe that the brigands have taken us by surprise. While my godfather is absent, I will protect you against yourself, by not allowing you to see the ladies. I'll borrow your tent. You must see for yourself that my skin is whiter than Hadji's. You see I object to expose it to all the variations of the temperature. What would be said at the ball on the 15th, if I were to appear as sunburnt as a peasant? Besides, I can't leave the poor ladies alone. It is my duty as their protector to console them. As for you, you can sleep here with my men. Allow me to give an order concerning you.

'Jani, Brigadier Jani! I give this gentleman into your charge. Let four armed sentinels attend him day and night. Relieve them every two hours. March!'" He bowed with ironical civility, and went singing down the steps while the sentinel saluted him.

From this moment there began for me a new form of mental torture. Every one knows or guesses what a prison is like, but try to imagine a living, ambulating prison, the four walls of which come and go, open and close, turn and return, rub their hands together, scratch, shake themselves, and obstinately fix four pair of big black eyes on the prisoner! I tried to walk; and my persecutors measured their steps on mine. I went to the boundaries of the camp; the two men who preceded me stopped short, and I knocked up against their uniforms. This accident explained an inscription I had often seen without understanding it in the neighbourhood of fortified places: "Limit of the garrison." I turned back. My four walls revolved on themselves like a theatrical decoration in a transformation scene. At last, tired out, I sat down. My prison seemed to move round me. I was like a man who sees his house turn. I shut my eyes; the measured sound of the military step soon wearied my ears.

"At least," thought I, "if these four braves would talk! I'll try them in Greek. It is a means of seduction that never has failed me with sentinels." I did try, but in vain. The walls had perhaps ears, but they were evidently forbidden to use their tongues; under arms, no speech is allowed. I drew from my pocket the money Hadji had returned to me, and the Captain forgotten to take, and distributed it to the four cardinal points of my abode. The sombre gloomy walls assumed a smiling aspect, and my dungeon seemed lighted by a ray of sunshine. But five minutes afterward the brigadier came to relieve the sentinels. I had been a prisoner only two hours! If the day seemed long, the night was eternal. The Captain had appropriated to himself my bed as well as my tent. A fine, cutting, penetrating rain made me cruelly sensible that roofs are excellent inventions, and tilers benefactors of society. If for a moment I managed to doze, Jani awoke me by giving the pass-word. And worse than all, I kept on thinking that Mary-Ann and her mother were on the best of terms with their pretended liberator!

Ah! my dear sir, how I began to render justice to the Mountain King, and to take back the maledictions I had heaped upon him! How I regretted his mild and paternal rule! How I sighed for his

return! How I prayed for him! "Good Lord, give the victory to your servant, Hadji Stavros! Let all the soldiers of the kingdom fall before him! May the money-chest and the last cannon-piece of this infernal army come into his hands! And send us back the brigands to deliver us from the carabineers!"

As I finished this prayer, file-firing was heard in the camp. This surprise was often renewed during the night, the following day, and the night afterward. Another trick of M. Pericles! Guns were let off from time to time, to better deceive Mrs. Simons, and persuade her that they were being defended against an army of brigands.

This fantasia might have cost him dear. When the brigands returned to the camp on Monday, they thought they had real enemies before them, and answered by a shot or two, which unfortunately hit no one.

Until the return of the King of the Mountains I never had seen a defeated army. The spectacle therefore had all the attraction of novelty. Heaven had not granted my prayers, and the Greek soldiers made so vigorous a defence that the fight lasted late into the night. Formed in square round the two mules that carried the chest, they had at first answered Hadji's skirmishes by a

steady fire. The old Palikar, despairing of picking off one by one 120 men, who would not yield, attacked them with small arms. His companions assured us that he had done wonders, and the blood with which he was covered proved how much he had exposed himself, but the bayonets had been too much for him. The troop had killed fourteen brigands, of which one was four-footed, and a regulation ball stopped young Spiro's promising career! There returned about sixty men overcome with fatigue, dusty, covered with blood, bruised, and wounded. Sophocles had a ball in his shoulder, and was carried on a litter. The Corfiote and others were left in the rear, some in shepherds' huts, or in villages, glad to obtain the shelter of a bare rock, or rest by the wayside. The whole band was gloomy and discouraged, Sophocles howling with pain. I heard some murmurs against the imprudence of the King, who had exposed the lives of his followers for a miserable sum, instead of peaceably fleecing rich and good-tempered travellers.

Of them all, none was so well-disposed, cheerful, and contented as his Majesty. His was the satisfaction of a man that has done his duty. He recognised me at once in the middle of my four men, and holding out his hand, said cordially:

"My dear prisoner, you see before you a very ill-treated King. Those dogs of soldiers would not give up the money-chest. It was theirs. They would not allow themselves to be killed for other people's property. My expedition has brought in nothing, and has cost me fourteen men, besides some wounded who won't recover. But, never mind! I fought well. The rascals outnumbered us, and had bayonets—if it had not been for that! Well! this day has made me younger. I have proved to my satisfaction that I still have some blood left in my veins."

And he hummed the lines of his favourite song:

"Down to the plain, etc., etc."

"By Jupiter, as Lord Byron used to say—no! not for another eight hundred pounds would I have stayed at home these past few days. This also will be related in my history. That at past seventy I rushed, sword in hand, against men armed with bayonets, killed three or four of them with my own hand, and afterward walked ten leagues in the mountains to return here and take my cup of coffee. Cafedji, my child, do your duty, I've done mine; but where the devil is Pericles?"

The handsome Captain was still snoring in his

tent. Jani ran to fetch him, and he appeared half asleep, his moustache uncurled, his head carefully wrapped up in a handkerchief. Nothing wakes a man better than cold water or bad news.

When M. Pericles heard that little Spiro and two carabineers had been killed, he gave himself up for lost, tore off his head-dress, and had he had less respect for his person would have torn out his hair.

"I'm ruined!" cried he. "How can I explain their presence among you?—and dressed as brigands too! The others are masters of the battlefield, and will have recognised them. Shall I say that they deserted to join you? That you had made them prisoners? I shall be asked why I did not mention it. I waited for you to make my general report. Yesterday, I wrote that I was driving you close on Parnassus, and that all my men were behaving splendidly.

"Holy Virgin! I would not dare show myself at the Patissia next Sunday. What will be said on the 15th at the Court Ball? All the embassies will be talking about me. A Council will be called. Who knows whether I shall be invited!"

"To the Council?"

"No; to the Court Ball!"

"You'd dance on one's grave!"

"Ah, my God! what shall I do? If it were only those Englishwomen, I would not care. I'd tell the War Minister everything. There are plenty of Englishwomen in the world! But lend my men to attack a treasure convoy! Send Spiro to fight against the Line! No; I shall be disgraced, and no more balls for me!"

Can you guess who was delighted during this monologue? My father's son, in the middle of his four guards. Hadji Stavros, quietly seated, sipped his coffee, then said to his godson: "What a fuss you make! Remain with us; I'll assure you a minimum of four hundred a year, and enroll your men. We'll take our revenge together."

The offer was tempting. Two days earlier it would have been accepted with enthusiasm. Nevertheless, it did not seem to please the carabineers, and their Captain still less. The soldiers said nothing. They looked at their former comrades, and at the wounded Sophocles, thought of those that had been killed, and turned their heads towards Athens, as if from afar they could scent the welcome odour of their barracks. As for Pericles, he answered with visible confusion: "Thanks, godfather, but I must consider. I'm accustomed to town life. My health is rather

delicate, and the winters must be hard in the mountain. I've already caught a cold. I should be missed, too, in society, for I am much sought after, and several brilliant marriages have been proposed to me. Besides, perhaps not so much mischief has been effected as we think. Who knows? Those three idiots may have escaped recognition. I'll first go to the Ministry, and discover which way the wind blows. The news of the event may not have been received yet; there will be no one to contradict me since the two detachments are still pursuing their march on Argos. Decidedly I must bestir myself; so take care of your wounded—and adieu!"

He made a sign to his drummer. Hadji Stavros rose, and placed himself between his godson and myself. He was a good head and shoulders taller than that youth.

"There, sir," said he, pointing to him, "you behold an up-to-date Greek! I myself am a Greek of the old school; and yet the newspapers are constantly informing us that we are progressing!"

At the sound of the drum my prison-walls seemed suddenly to separate like the ramparts of Jericho, and two minutes later I stood before the door of Mary-Ann's tent. The ladies awoke with

a start. Mrs. Simons, on perceiving me, exclaimed: "Well! are we free?"

"Alas! madam, far from that!"

"Where are we then? The Captain gave us his word that we could start this morning."

"What did you think of the Captain?"

"Charming, distinguished, delightful! Too much the slave of discipline, that's his only fault."

"Rascal, villain, coward, thief, and liar! Those are his true titles, and I'll prove it."

"Why, what's the matter? What have the carabineers done to you?"

"What have they done? Be so good as to follow me to the top of yon steps."

Mrs. Simons obeyed, and was in time to see the soldiers marching off with their drums and flag, the brigands installed in their old places, and the Captain and the King tenderly embracing in each other's arms. I had broken this curious piece of news all too brusquely to the poor lady, for on beholding this scene she fainted, and fell with all her weight upon me. I carried her to the spring; Mary-Ann slapped her hands and threw water in her face, but I believe it was sheer temper that eventually brought her to herself.

"The villains!" cried she. "Did he rob you? Did he take your watch and your money? He

did ours. I don't regret them. Let him keep them. But I'd give some hundreds of pounds not to have shaken hands with him! I'm English, and I don't shake hands with any one!"

I could not help sighing. Mrs. Simons continued more furious than ever, throwing all the blame on poor me. "It's your fault! Why didn't you warn me? You should have told me that the brigands were saints compared to these wretches!"

"But I did tell you that you ought not to rely upon the carabineers."

"Yes, you told me, but only in your usual stupid, phlegmatic, German manner. How was I to believe you? How could I guess that this man was nothing more nor less than Hadji's minion? That he kept us here merely to give the brigands time to return? That he frightened us by imaginary dangers? That he declared he was besieged in order that we might see how well he defended himself? Now I see through the whole thing; but you, you stupid, kept silent. Why did you not speak? I say, why did you not speak?"

"I informed you of what I knew, and did all I could!" I retorted.

"To be sure; but then, you see, after all, you are only a German! In your place an English-

man would have sacrificed his life for us, and I would have given him my daughter's hand."

Poppies are red, but I became scarlet while listening to Mrs. Simons's burning denunciation. I was so confused that I did not dare raise my eyes, nor answer, nor even ask what the good lady meant.

How could so prim a woman speak in this way before her daughter and a stranger? What in the world made her think of marriage? Was she a woman to reward the person that would save her by giving him her daughter? Were not her significant words merely an ironical answer to my secret hopes?

When I examined myself, I was justly proud of the platonism of my feelings. I saw with pleasure that the ardour of passion had not raised my temperature by a single degree.

In my dreams I had even thought of Princess Ypsoff and her lieutenant. I saw myself seated in a post-chaise, my idol at my right, with her lovely arm twined around my long neck.

All these flattering images, which would have profoundly agitated a less philosophical spirit than mine, left me calm. I did not feel the alternatives of hope and despair that are the characteristic signs of love, nor any of the terrible pangs of a tortured heart mentioned in novels.

Therefore, I concluded I evidently did not love Mary-Ann, and could look any one straight in the face—even Mrs. Simons!

But that excellent lady, who had not read my thoughts, might easily mistake the nature of my devotion. Who could tell whether she did not suspect my passion for her daughter?—whether she did not interpret unfavourably my confusion, my timidity? Might she not have pronounced the word "marriage" only to compel me to betray my real sentiments? My pride revolted against the injustice of this suspicion, and I answered as sternly as I could, but without looking her in the face:

"Madam, if I am fortunate enough to get you away from here, I swear that it would not be with the intention of marrying your daughter!"

"And why not, sir?" was the astonished answer. "Is my daughter not good enough for you? I must say you're hard to please! Perhaps she isn't sufficiently beautiful, is not so rich or well-born as you would wish? Has she been badly brought up? Have you anything to say against her? A marriage with Miss Simons, my good sir, might content the most ambitious of men, for it would be a most brilliant match, I can tell you!"

"Alas! my dear madam, you misunderstand me. Your daughter is perfection itself. Were it not that her presence renders me timid, I would tell you of the passionate admiration I have felt for her from the first. It is precisely on that account that I have not the presumption to think, for a single moment, that I stand any chance of winning favour."

I had hoped that my humility would soften this termagant of a mother—but, on the contrary, it seemed only to stimulate her resentment.

"Why?" cried she. "Why shouldn't you deserve my daughter? Answer me!"

"But, madam, I have neither fortune nor position," I meekly replied.

"What on earth does that matter! No position! You'd have one if you married Mary-Ann. Isn't it a position to be my son-in-law? No fortune! Have we ever asked you for money? Haven't we enough for us, for you, and others too? Besides, will not the man that gets us from here richly deserve four thousand pounds? I admit that the sum is small, but it is something at least. Do you think it contemptibly small? No? Then why don't you try to deserve Mary-Ann's hand?"

"Madam, I am not——"

"What are *you not?*" she retorted savagely, showing her large teeth. "You're not English, you mean?"

"Not in the remotest degree."

"Well, you don't suppose I'm fool enough to reproach you with that? Don't I know it is not given to every one to be English?—and unfortunately the whole world is not English. At least, not yet. But, after all, it is possible to be an honourable and intelligent man without having been born in England."

"As for probity, madam, we have been honest folk from generation to generation. As for intelligence, I have just enough to have won my degree of doctor. But unfortunately I cannot deceive myself as to my personal appearance."

"You mean that you are plain? Why no!—you're not that. You've an intelligent face. Hasn't he, Mary-Ann?"

"Yes, mother!" said Mary-Ann. Whether she blushed or not I can't say, for my eyes were fixed on the ground.

"Besides," continued Mrs. Simons rudely, "if you were ten times plainer, you wouldn't be half as plain as was my lamented husband. And yet, let me tell you, I was quite as pretty as is Mary-Ann the day I married him. What do you say to that?"

"Nothing, madam," I answered humbly, "excepting that you are too good, and that it will not be my fault if to-morrow you're not on your way to Athens."

"And how are you going to manage it? This time try to invent some less ridiculous plan than the last."

"If you'll only listen to me I hope you'll be satisfied."

"I will."

"Without interrupting me?"

"I won't interrupt you. Have I ever done so?"

"Yes!"

"No!"

"But I say yes, madam."

"When?"

"Well, if you like, never! But please listen. Hadji Stavros has all his money in the firm of Messrs. Barclay & Co."

"What! In our bank?" echoed the amazed lady.

"No. 31 Cavendish Square, London. Last Wednesday he dictated a business letter addressed to Mr. Barclay."

"And you didn't tell me this sooner?"

"You refused to listen!"

"But it's monstrous! We should have been

free six days ago! I would have gone straight to him, and told him the connection between us!"

"And he would have demanded twelve thousand pounds instead of four! Believe me, the wisest plan is to say nothing at all about this discovery. Pay your ransom. Make him give you a receipt, and a fortnight hence send him his passbook, in which he will have been debited with the following sum:

"'Four thousand pounds remitted by Mrs. Simons in person, against receipt, to our client.' In this manner you'll get back your money without the assistance of the carabineers. Is it clear?"

I raised my eyes, and saw Mary-Ann's face was radiant with delight.

Mrs. Simons shrugged her shoulders impatiently, and cried: "You've known all this since Wednesday. I never shall forgive you for not having told us at once!

"But, pray remember, that I begged you to write to your brother for £4600."

"Why the extra hundreds?"

"I mean £4000."

"No! quite right. It's only just. But are you sure that this Stavros won't keep us here after having got the money?"

"I'll answer for that. The brigands are the

only Greeks that always keep their word. You quite understand that if they did not, the ransom never would be paid."

"That's quite true. But what a queer kind of man you are, to be sure, not to have spoken sooner!"

"But, madam, you invariably prevented me."

"I prevent you—I should have insisted."

"But, madam," I interrupted somewhat impatiently: the old lady was becoming tiresome.

"Hold your tongue, do!" she burst out snappishly, "and lead me to this old villain Stavros's den."

We found the King seated under his favourite tree, surrounded by his available officers, enjoying a breakfast of roast doves.

He had changed his clothes, washed the blood from his royal hands, and was consulting with his gang as to the quickest way of filling up the vacancies occasioned by death among his men.

Vasili, a native of Janina, offered to raise thirty men in Epirus alone, where the vigilance of the Turkish authorities had obliged a thousand brigands to retire from business. A Laconian suggested that the little band of Spartan Paolos who infested the province of Magnus, near Calamata, might easily be bought for ready money.

The King, as usual, imbued with English ideas, wished to organize a system of obligatory recruiting, and to carry off all the shepherds in Attica. This scheme appeared all the more advantageous, since it necessitated no outlay, and moreover the flocks could be annexed at the same time as their pastors.

Hadji was evidently annoyed by our interruption, and received us very coolly. He didn't even offer a glass of water to Mrs. Simons, and as she had not had her breakfast, this lack of attention upset her temper very considerably.

I made myself spokesman for the ladies, and in the absence of the tiny fiend from Corfu, Hadji was perforce obliged to accept me as interpreter. I told him that, especially after the disasters of the previous day, he ought to be glad that Mrs. Simons had decided to pay her ransom with as little delay as possible, and that the money could be paid the following day either into the Bank of Athens, or in any other way he might suggest.

"I am pleased to hear," said he, sententiously, "that these women have given up their attempt to summon the Greek army to their assistance. Tell them for the second time that they shall have all the writing materials they require. But don't let them again venture to abuse my confidence. Above

all, don't let them try to bring the soldiers here. At sight of the first shako that appears in the mountains, by the Virgin of Megaspelion, I'll cut their throats."

"Have no fear. They will abstain from all intrigue with the soldiers. Where do you desire the money to be deposited?"

"At the National Bank of Greece. It is the only one not yet bankrupt."

"Have you a safe man to carry the letter?"

"There's the 'good old man.' I'll send for him. What o'clock is it? Nine? The Reverend Father never is drunk until later in the day."

"The monk will do very well. When Mrs. Simons's brother has paid the money and got your receipt, the 'good old man' can come and tell us."

"What receipt? What need is there of a receipt? I never have given one. When you are all at liberty, that will suffice to prove I have been paid."

"Yes; but I imagined that a man of your intelligence would do business after the European fashion. And to be business-like——"

"I do business as I choose, and am too old to change my method of transacting it."

"Just as you please. I asked in Mrs. Simons's interest. She is her daughter's guardian, the latter

being still a minor, and therefore the elder lady must account to her trustees for the spending of her fortune."

"That's her affair. I care as much for her interests as she does for mine. And if she *did* pay for her daughter, what would it matter? I never regret what I spend on Photini. Here are paper, ink, and reeds. Pray take care how the letter is written. Your own life is at stake too."

I rose considerably discouraged, and followed the ladies, who saw that I was greatly put out without however understanding the wherefore. But a sudden inspiration induced me to retrace my steps. I said to the King: "Decidedly you were right to refuse the receipt, and I wrong to ask for it. You are wiser than I am. Youth is always imprudent."

"What do you mean?"

"You were right, I say. One must be prepared for everything. Who knows whether you will not suffer a second defeat more terrible than the first? As you will not always be so active as now, you may fall alive into the soldiers' hands."

"I?"

"You would be tried like an ordinary malefactor, and a receipt for £4600 would be an overwhelming proof. Don't put arms against yourself into the hands of justice. Perhaps Mrs. Simons

or her heirs would prosecute you to get back what they had paid!"

He answered in a voice of thunder:

"I'll sign it! and rather two than one! I'll sign always, and for every one! Ah! if the soldiers think that they will get the better of me because, for once, chance, and their number favoured them! *I* fall alive into their hands! I, whose arm never tires, whose head is proof against balls! I, go and sit on a bench before a damned judge like a vile peasant that has been taken up for cabbage-stealing? I! I'll have a fit, if you hint at such a thing again.

"Young man! You don't yet know Hadji Stavros," he continued, gesticulating wildly. "It would be easier to tear up Ozas, and place it on the summit of Taygetus, than to drive me from my mountains and hand me over to the tender mercies of the worthy Dame you call Justice. Ah! ah! Quick! Write me Mrs. Simons's name in Greek. Good. Yours also."

"It is not necessary—and——"

"Write it. Write it, I tell you," he went on breathlessly. "You know my name, and have some reason not to forget it. I wish to be able to remember yours."

I scribbled "Hermann Schultz" as best I could

in Plato's melodious tongue. The King's subordinates applauded his firmness, never dreaming that it would eventually cost him and them dear.

With a light heart, I ran to Mrs. Simons's tent, and told her what a narrow escape her money had had, and she condescended to smile on hearing how I had managed to outwit our captors.

In half-an-hour she gave me the following letter to read:

"*From Mount Ozas in the midst of Stavros's demons.*

"My dear Brother:

"We have been shamefully betrayed and robbed by the carabineers you sent to our aid. I trust you will be able to get them hanged. They richly deserve it. Their captain, Pericles, most assuredly merits to swing from a gallows at least a hundred feet high.

"I shall complain of him particularly in a dispatch I intend to forward to Lord Palmerston, and mention him hotly in a letter to the editor of the *Times*, and this as soon as you have liberated us. There is nothing to hope for from the local authorities; honesty is unknown to them. Happily, they won't get much out of us. I have learned, from a young German whom I at first took for a spy, but who is really a very honest gentleman, that this

Stavros, called Hadji Stavros, banks with our House. Verify the fact, please, and if it is exact, nothing prevents us from paying the ransom exacted. Deposit in the Bank of Greece £4600 against a formal receipt, stamped with the ordinary seal of this Stavros. The sum will be placed to his credit, and all will be right. Our health is good in spite of the discomfort we are enduring. It is monstrous that two Englishwomen, citizens of the greatest Empire in the world, should be reduced to eat roast meat without mustard or pickles. Hoping that we shall meet soon,

"I remain,

"Your affectionate sister,

"REBECCA SIMONS.

"*Monday, May 5, 1856.*"

I took the letter to the King myself. He looked it over suspiciously, and I was really alarmed lest he should get an inkling of its meaning. Yet I knew he did not understand a word of English, but he inspired me with such a superstitious terror that I thought him capable of anything.

He only seemed satisfied when he got to the figures £4600 sterling. Then he believed that nothing had been said about the carabineers. The letter, with other papers, was placed in a tin

cylinder, and entrusted to the "good old man," who was drunk, but not sufficiently so to prevent his using his legs. My thoughts followed him all along his way. Horace did not look more tenderly after the vessel that carried off Vergil.

Once this great business was over, the King's manner became pleasanter. He ordered a splendid repast for us, and distributed a double allowance of wine to his men, went to visit the wounded, and with his own hands extracted the ball from Sophocles' shoulder. The brigands also were told to treat us with the respect due—to our money.

Never did I enjoy a meal so much as that which I now shared with the ladies. It seemed to me that my misfortunes were drawing to a close. In two days I should be free—two days of a sweet captivity! Perhaps on leaving Hadji Stavros, a still more adorable chain might be riveted. I experienced all the ardour of a poet!

But that did not hinder me from doing as much justice to the viands and our excellent wine as Mrs. Simons. That wine of Ægina, my dear sir, has a flavour that one never forgets. I drank to Mary-Ann's, to her mother's health, to all our relations, and even to Princess Ypsoff.

Mrs. Simons was anxious to hear the story of the charming Russian, and I had no reason for

keeping it a secret. Good examples cannot be too widely known. Mary-Ann looked greatly interested. She declared that the Princess was quite right, and that a woman should marry the man she loves. What a charming sentiment! To hear her make use of it transported me with joy. Ah, Mary-Ann! if those that brave the dangers of the sea could but be guided in their course by stars as beautiful as your eyes!

I was seated at her feet, and while passing her some chicken was so close that twice I saw myself reflected in the limpid azure of those orbs. For the first time in my life, my dear sir, I really began to think that after all I was handsome!

Of course I know all this was not love, and I don't wish to affect a sentiment I never have expressed. But it indicated at least the existence of a friendship, sufficiently romantic, in my opinion at least, for any man who contemplates marriage. No turbulent emotion accelerated the pulsations of my heart, but it seemed to melt gradually in the presence of Mary-Ann, just as a snowball does in the rays of the sun.

Under the influence of this reasonable ecstasy, the first day I told the history of my life: described my father's house—the big kitchen in which we all took our meals together—the copper

pans hanging on the wall—the hams and sausages suspended in garlands near the great chimney-place. I did not conceal the modesty, even the poverty, of our household, nor the projects entertained by each member of my honest but humble family.

Henry was to succeed our father; Frederick was apprenticed to a tailor; Frank and Jean-Nicolas had enlisted when they were eighteen. One was brigadier, the other a cavalry quartermaster. I told them all about my studies, my examinations, my little successes at the University; the future before me as Professor, which was sure to lead to the full enjoyment of £120 at least a year. I don't know whether they cared much to hear all this, but while filling my glass from time to time I was only too pleased to talk about myself and my prospects.

I noticed, however, that after these confidences Mrs. Simons never again alluded to matrimony. Possibly she was right. Since we knew each other so little, it was better not to speak of it at all, than to do so lightly. The day passed like an hour—I mean a pleasant hour. The next day seemed possibly a little wearisome to Mrs. Simons; as for me, I should have liked to have been able to put back the sun. I taught Mary-Ann the first elements of

botany. Ah! my dear sir, the world does not know all the tenderness one can put into a lesson in botany, especially if one happens to be a Professor of the science.

At last, on the following Wednesday morning, the monk returned. After all, he was a worthy little fellow. He had risen at dawn to bring us liberty! For the King, he brought a letter from the Director of the bank; for Mrs. Simons a note from her brother.

"You are free, madam," said Hadji Stavros; "you and your daughter. I trust you will not carry with you a too unfavourable impression of our mountains. We have offered you all we had; if your reception has not been worthy of you, circumstances alone are to be blamed. This morning I lost my temper. I beg of you to pardon me; some allowance should always be made to a vanquished general. If I dared, young lady, to offer you a small present, I would beg you to accept of an antique ring, which can be made smaller to fit you. It has not come to me in the usual way. I bought it from a merchant of Nauplia. You can show this ring in England when relating the particulars of your visit to the King of the Mountains."

I translated faithfully this little speech, and slipped the ring on Mary-Ann's finger.

"And I, shall I have nothing to remember you by?"

"You, my dear young friend. But you are not leaving us, your ransom is not paid."

I turned to Mrs. Simons, who gave me her brother's letter. It ran as follows:

"DEAR SISTER:

"Verification made as you desired. I have paid the £4000 st. against receipt. I could not advance the £600, because the receipt was not in your name, and I should not have been able to recover the sum. In the hope of seeing you very soon,

"I am, your affectionate brother,

"EDWARD SHARPER."

I had coached Hadji Stavros only too well. Like a good business man, he had sent two receipts!

Mrs. Simons whispered to me:

"You look dumfounded! Is there any reason for being so glum? Show that you are a man. Don't be so chicken-hearted! The worst is over since we are saved, and without the cost of a farthing. You'll be able to escape. Your first plan, worth nothing for us, will be excellent for you. On what day may we expect your visit?"

I thanked her cordially. She offered me an opportunity of proving to Mary-Ann of what heroism I was capable.

"Yes, madam," said I, "I'll escape, and so much the better if I run a little risk. I'm glad my ransom is not paid, and I thank your brother for what he has done for me. You shall see that a German knows how to help himself. Yes; you will soon hear from me."

"Do not forget to visit us as soon as possible."

"Ah, madam!"

"And now, ask this Stavros to give us an escort of five or six brigands."

"What for, in the name of heaven?"

"Why, of course, to protect and save us from the police!"

CHAPTER VI

THE ESCAPE

WHILE we were saying good-bye, the whole place was suddenly permeated by a strong smell of garlic that nearly suffocated us. It was due to the arrival on the scene of the Albanian maid-servant, who came to implore the ladies to remember her—generously. The woman had proved far more useless than useful, and during the last two days her services had actually been dispensed with. Mrs. Simons, however, was sorry not to be able to do anything for her, and begged me to tell the King the manner in which her money had been stolen from her.

Hadji seemed neither surprised nor shocked. He simply shrugged his shoulders and mumbled —that Pericles—had education—spoiled by living in towns! I ought to have expected it. Then he added aloud:

"Beg these ladies not to trouble themselves any more about the matter. I gave them a serv-

ant, and it's my business to pay her. Tell them that if they want a little money to return to Athens, my purse is at their service. Although there is no danger, they shall be escorted to the foot of the mountain. The carabineers are less to be feared than is generally supposed. The ladies will find at Castia, breakfast, horses, and a guide. Everything has been arranged, everything paid. Do you think, as a sign that there is no ill-will between us, they would do me the honour to shake hands with me?"

Mrs. Simons exhibited some reluctance to perform this act of civility, but Mary-Ann extended her hand frankly to the old Palikar, saying rather maliciously as she did so: "You are too good, sir, for, at the present moment, we are the Klephts, and you the victim."

The King answered quietly: "I return you my most sincere thanks, young lady, for your politeness."

Mary-Ann's pretty hand was bleached by the sun like a piece of rose-coloured satin that has remained too long in the shop-window, but I was none the less gratified by pressing it to my lips. Afterward I also kissed the mother's wrinkled paw. "Courage!" cried the old dame as she departed. Mary-Ann remained silent, but beamed

upon me a smile that would have electrified an army.

When the last man of the escort had disappeared, Hadji took me aside.

"Well! It seems that you haven't been clever?"

"No doubt; but I'm not the only one in the same boat."

"Your ransom is not paid. Will it be so? I can't help thinking it, because you and the Englishwomen appear to be on the best of terms."

"Don't be alarmed; in three days I shall be far from here."

"So much the better. I want money badly. The losses of last Monday will weigh heavily on my budget, and I must also replace men and material."

"It's cool of you to complain, considering that by one stroke of luck you've made four thousand pounds!"

"No; not four thousand—three thousand six hundred; the monk has already got his tithe. And of this sum, which you think so considerable, not more than eight hundred pounds will fall to my share. Our expenses are heavy: we have many obligations. And what would it be, if, as has already been mooted, the shareholders decided

to found a hospital for invalids? To give pensions to the brigands' widows and orphans would be the last straw! Fever and musket-balls cost us thirty men, year in, year out—so you see where *that* would lead us! We scarcely could make two ends meet; in fact, my dear young friend, I should have to encroach upon my savings."

"Have you ever been a loser?"

"Only once. I had just received two thousand pounds. One of my secretaries, who has since been hanged, took himself off to Thessaly with the money. I had to replace the deficit, being held responsible for it by the Company. As my share would have been two hundred and eighty pounds, I lost seventeen hundred and twenty pounds. But the rascal paid dear for his trick. I punished him in the Persian fashion.

"Before being hanged, his teeth were drawn, one by one, and then hammered into his skull. This was simply to make an example of him, you see. I'm not hard to deal with, but don't like being humbugged."

I chuckled inwardly at the thought that the Palikar, "who wasn't hard to deal with," would lose £3600 of Mrs. Simons's ransom, and that he would get this pleasant bit of news when my

skull and my teeth would be beyond his reach. He passed his arm familiarly into mine.

"How will you pass your time until you leave us? You'll miss the ladies terribly. Would you like to cast an eye over the Athenian papers? The monk has brought us a bundle of them. As for me I never open one, knowing exactly what the articles are worth, since I pay for them. Here are the *Official Gazette*, the *Dawn*, *Palikar*, and the *Caricature*, a sort of Athenian *Punch*. No doubt they say a lot about us. The poor subscribers, I pity them! Now I'll leave you, and if you find anything worth repeating, you'll tell me."

The *Dawn*, written in French, and chiefly to blind Europe, had devoted a long article to contradicting the last news about the brigands.

It ridiculed, smartly enough, the foolish travellers who saw a robber in every ragged peasant, an armed band in every dust-cloud, and who go on their knees and implore mercy of the first bush that catches their clothes. This truthful organ boasted of the security of the roads, praised the disinterestedness of the natives, and spoke of the calm and repose to be found in the mountains.

The *Palikar*, inspired by some of Hadji's friends, contained an eloquent biography of its hero. It told how this Theseus of our time, the

only man of the century who never had been beaten, had attempted a strong reconnaissance in the direction of the Scironian rocks.

"Betrayed by the lack of energy of his troops, he had, it seemed, retired with little loss; but overwhelmed by a sense of profound disgust for a profession that had so sadly degenerated, he had decided to retire from it; even to leave Greece, and enjoy in Europe a gloriously-acquired fortune, which would allow him to retire *en Prince.*

"So now," added the *Palikar*, "bankers and merchants, Greeks, travellers, or foreigners, have nothing more to fear. Plains and mountains may be roamed with impunity. Like Charles V, the Mountain King has chosen to abdicate at the apogee of his glory."

I read in the *Official Gazette:* "Sunday, 3rd of the current month, at 5 p. m., the military chest, which was being forwarded to Argos, and contained £800, was attacked by the band of Hadji Stavros, known as the King of the Mountains. The brigands, three or four hundred strong, threw themselves upon the escort with incredible fury. But the two first companies of the 2nd and 4th of the Line, commanded by the brave Major Nicolaïdis, made an heroic defence. The savage aggressors

were repelled at the bayonet's point, and numbers remained on the battle-field. It is reported that Hadji Stavros is severely wounded—our losses are insignificant.

"At the same hour, and at ten leagues distance, the royal troops had a brilliant success. Towards the summit of Ozas, at some few miles from Castia, the second company of the first battalion of carabineers defeated the band of Hadji Stavros. There also, according to the report of Captain Pericles, the King of the Mountains was wounded. Unfortunately, our victory has been dearly paid. The brigands, sheltered by rocks and bushes, killed or seriously wounded ten carabineers. A young and most promising officer, M. Spiro, pupil of the school of Euelpides, met with a glorious death on the battle-field. While we deplore these misfortunes, it is consoling to think that the majesty of the law has been vindicated."

The *Caricature* contained a wretched lithograph, in which I recognised portraits of Pericles and of Hadji Stavros. The two were here represented hugging each other tenderly, and underneath appeared this inscription:

"SEE HOW THEY FIGHT!"

"It seems," said I, "that I am not the only confidant. At this rate Pericles' secret will soon be that of Pulcinello."

I folded up the papers, and, still waiting for the King's return, meditated on the position in which I found myself. Certainly there was something in owing my liberty entirely to myself, and it was better to get out of prison by some deed of courage, than owe liberty to a schoolboy's trick. Any day now I might become a hero of romance, and the admiration of half the women in Europe. Mary-Ann would adore me if I returned safe after so daring and perilous an escape. Yet might I come to condign grief during this frightful descent. If I broke an arm or a leg, would Mary-Ann care for a mutilated hero?

Besides, I might make up my mind to be watched day and night. My plan, however ingenious it might be, was only feasible after my jailer's death. Now, to kill a man is no small affair—even for a doctor. It seemed nothing when one is talking about it to the woman one adores. But, since Mary-Ann's departure I had considerably cooled down. I did not think it so easy to procure a murderous weapon, or to use it when found. After all, I'm naturally humane, and kill-

ing a man is no trifling matter, even to a surgeon. What say you, my dear sir?

Besides, it began to dawn upon me that my future mother-in-law had treated the affair with considerable levity. What would it have cost her to send the £600 for my ransom, even if in the end she repaid herself by deducting the amount from Mary-Ann's dowry? The sum would be little or nothing to me on my wedding-day. It seemed enormous, pursued as I was by the necessity of cutting another man's throat, and of climbing down some hundred yards of the flat surface of a precipice—without a ladder.

I finished by cursing Mrs. Simons cordially, as most men do their mothers-in-law—sooner or later. And as I was in a thoroughly bad temper, John Harris, who was abandoning me to my fate, also came in for his share of my maledictions.

I said to myself, that had he been in my place, and I in his, I would not have left him eight whole days without news. Lobster I could understand—he was so young. Giacomo, an intelligent Hercules, and Mérinay a double-dyed egotist. One forgives egotists for being treacherous, because one has not been accustomed to rely upon them. But Harris, who had exposed his life to

save an old negress at Boston! Surely a German Professor is worth a negress?

Hadji Stavros interrupted my unpleasant meditations by offering me a means of escape much more simple and less dangerous than the one I contemplated, since it only required good legs, and on that score I had no reason to envy any one. I fell in with the King just as I was indulging in a prodigious yawn.

"You're bored?" he began. "It's because you read too much; I never could read without yawning. But why don't you employ better the time that remains to you? You came here in search of rare plants, yet your case is as empty as it was a week ago. Would you like to go for a stroll in the company of two guards? I'm too good-natured to refuse you this favour. Each of us must pursue his trade in this world. Mine is to make money: yours to gather plants. When you return to Hamburg you'll be able to say: 'Here are plants collected in the kingdom of Hadji Stavros!' If you find a remarkably fine one, hitherto unknown, give it my name—call it the Mountain King!"

"By heaven!" thought I, "if I were a league away from here, between two brigands, it wouldn't be difficult to give them the slip. Danger would

lend me wings, that's certain. The best runner is the one who has the greatest interest to effect his escape. Why is the hare the swiftest of animals? Because he's the most often pursued."

I accepted the King's offer, and at once two guards were told off to follow me. Their orders were simple enough: "The Milord is worth £600. If you lose him you'll have to pay or lose your heads."

My acolytes were not selected from among the invalids. They were neither wounded, bruised, nor damaged in any way. Evidently they were not easily tired, and there was no fear of their shoes hurting them, for they wore wide moccasins that left the heel bare.

On looking them over I perceived with regret that they were each armed with two long pistols, Still I did not lose courage; the whistle of a passing shot was becoming a familiar sound to me. I threw my knapsack over my shoulders and we started.

"Amuse yourself well," cried Hadji. "Adieu, sir!"

I echoed: "Not adieu—*au revoir!*"

I selected, for obvious reasons, the road that led to Athens. My friends made no comment, and allowed me to go where I pleased. These

brigands, much better bred than Pericles' carabineers, left me passable freedom. I did not feel at each step I made their elbows sticking into my sides. They even assisted me to gather herbs. As for me, I appeared much absorbed in my work, and rooted up right and left tufts of harmless sod. Then I pretended to choose some particular kind from the mass, and to put it carefully into my herbal, taking care not to overload myself, for I had already a sufficient weight to carry.

I had noticed that a few pounds overweight might make a jockey lose his race. Meanwhile my eyes seemed fixed on the ground, but they were really elsewhere. Perchance I may have passed by many a plant, the discovery of which would have made the fortune of a naturalist.

I'm nearly sure that I passed by a root of the *Borgana variabilis*, weighing perhaps half-a-pound. I didn't even look at it.

I saw only two things—Athens, in the distance, and the brigands by my side. I watched them closely in the hope that their attention might be diverted. But whether they were close to me, or ten paces off, whether they were picking their salad or observing the flight of the vultures it all was the same—at least one pair of eyes followed my every movement.

At last I decided to give them something serious to do. We were in a narrow path, leading clearly towards Athens. I saw at my left a beautiful bunch of broom that Providence had evidently placed at the top of a rock on purpose to be of use to me. I pretended ardently to wish to possess myself of this treasure. Five or six times I vainly tried to climb the steep bank above which it grew, but each time I was unsuccessful. So persevering, however, were my efforts, that one of my guards took pity upon me and offered to allow me, the better to reach the coveted plant, to get on his back. I accepted his offer, but on mounting his shoulders I purposely kicked him with my hob-nailed boots so cruelly, as if by accident, that he howled with pain and let me fall.

His comrade, who was deeply interested in the success of the enterprise, said to him: "Wait an instant. I've no iron nails in my shoes, and I'll go up instead of Milord."

No sooner said than done. He got up, seized the plant, shook and uprooted it, but in less time than it takes me to tell you, I was already off. Their amazement gave me ten seconds to the good.

They, however, lost no time in mutual recriminations, and I soon heard them in hot pursuit.

The road happened to be a fairly good one, without stones—the curse of most Greek roads. We scampered down a steep descent. I ran furiously, my arms close to my body, without looking where I placed my feet. The rocks and bushes seemed to be rushing in a contrary direction to myself. I was young, active, a light weight; in short, I had wings. But those measured steps behind me seemed to be constantly gaining on me. Suddenly they stopped, and I heard nothing. A small cloud of dust rose ten steps in front of me. Presently a white spot appeared on a neighbouring rock, and at the same time I heard two detonations. The brigands had fired their pistols, but, thank God, had missed me; nevertheless, I still continued running.

The pursuit began again; panting voices cried "Stop! stop!" but naturally I turned a deaf ear to their friendly entreaties. I was no longer in the path, and I ran on without knowing whither. A ditch came in my way, wide as a brook, but I never thought of measuring the distance. I jumped—was saved—when suddenly my braces broke, and all was lost!

You smile! But I should like to see you run without braces, holding up your trousers in your hands by the waistband. Five minutes later the

brigands caught me up. They immediately handcuffed and fettered me, and drove me with blows back to the camp.

The King received me as he would a bankrupt who had gone off with £600. "Sir," said he, "I had a very different opinion of you. I fancied I could read character, and yours has deceived me. Never could I have believed that you would wrong us, especially after the manner in which I have treated you. Do not be surprised if in future I take severe measures to secure your valued person. You have forced me to do so. You will be kept in your room until further orders. One of my officers will remain in your tent. This is only a precaution. If such a thing occurs again, you must expect to be punished. Vasili, I entrust this gentleman to your care." And after pronouncing this sentence upon me, his Majesty bowed with his usual politeness.

I will not descant upon the three days I passed in Vasili's society. It was a dose of boredom that I would not wish to share with my worst enemy. He, however, did not dislike me, but had, on the contrary, a certain sympathy for me. I believe that if he had taken me prisoner he would have let me go without a ransom.

My face had pleased him from the first; it re-

called to him that of a brother he had lost—who had gone the way of most brigands. But his demonstrations of friendship were, nevertheless, more odious. He could not wait for the sun to rise to wish me good-morning; when the night came he overwhelmed me with good wishes. He would wake me out of my sleep to ask if I was warm enough. At table, he waited upon me like a servant; at dessert, he told me tales or begged me to relate some to him. And his big coarse paw was always waiting to seize my hand and shake it.

I opposed an obstinate resistance to all his friendly advances. Besides my repugnance to include among my friends this vulgar Herod, I did not dare to press the hand of a man I intended, if occasion presented, to slay.

While repelling his advances, despising his civilities, and declining his attentions, I carefully watched for an opportunity to escape; but his friendship proved far more vigilant than my hatred, and defeated my purpose at every turn. When I leaned over the cascade to engrave in my memory each spot of ground, Vasili said with fraternal solicitude: "Take care! If you have the misfortune to fall down there, I should reproach myself all my life!"

When at night I tried to get up unknown to

him, he would forthwith jump out of his bed to ask me if I needed anything. Never was there a more wide-awake rascal. He revolved round and round me like a squirrel in its cage.

What made me more wretched than anything else was his confidence in me. One day I expressed a desire to examine his arms. He immediately handed me his dagger. It was of Damascus steel, but made at Toula. I drew it out of the sheath, tried the point with my finger, and turned it towards his breast, choosing the place between the fourth and fifth ribs. "Don't press," said he, "or you'd kill me." Certainly by pressing a little he would have got what he deserved, but a something I can't explain or describe, held back my hand. It's a pity that honest men find it so difficult to do away with rogues!

I replaced the dagger in its sheath. Then he offered me his pistol, but I refused to take it, and told him my curiosity was quite gratified. He cocked it, showed me the priming, and putting the muzzle to his forehead, said: "There! If it went off, you would no longer have a guard!"

That was precisely what I wanted; but the opportunity was too good, and the traitor paralyzed me. If I had killed him at that moment I should not have lost sight of his dying glances.

It was far better to make my attempt upon him in the darkness of night. Unfortunately, instead of concealing his arms, he laid them between his own bed and mine.

At length I discovered a new means of flight without awakening, and, above all, without killing him. I had remarked, on Ascension Day, that Vasili was fond of wine, and that it soon went to his head. So I invited him to dine with me. This proof of friendship nearly turned his head, and the wine did the rest. Hadji, who had not honoured me with a visit since I had fallen in his esteem, nevertheless treated me royally, and my table was better served than his own. I might have had a skin of wine and a tun of rhaki had I wished. Vasili, once admitted to share these good things, began the repast with touching humility. He remained at least three feet away from the table, like a peasant in the presence of his lord.

Little by little the wine gave him confidence. At eight in the evening, he told me, from his own standpoint, what sort of man he was. At nine, he related the more or less scandalous episodes of his younger days, and a series of exploits that would have made a judge's hair stand on end. At ten, he turned philanthropist—his heart melted under

the influence of the rhaki, like Cleopatra's pearl in the vinegar. He vowed that he had taken to the trade of brigand out of sheer love of humanity, and that he only wished to make a large fortune in order to found hospitals with his savings, and then retire to a monastery on Mount Athos.

He promised not to forget me in his prayers, and I took advantage of his state to pour him out an enormous cup of rhaki. I might have given him burning pitch—he was too far gone to refuse anything I offered. Soon he became speechless; his head wagged from side to side like the pendulum of a clock. Presently he fell to the ground in as sound a slumber as the sphinxes at the foot of the Pyramids, which even your cannon failed to disturb.

I had not an instant to lose: the minutes were worth their weight in gold to me. I threw his pistol into the ravine, and was on the point of sending his dagger after it, when I reflected that it might prove useful. It was then eleven o'clock. I put out the two heaps of resinous wood that had afforded us light during the evening, lest they might attract Hadji's attention. The weather was fine: no moon, but a profusion of stars—just the sort of night I wished for. I cut the sod in long strips, and without difficulty. At the end of an

hour my materials were ready. As I was conveying them to the spring my foot knocked against Vasili.

He tried to rise, and mechanically asked me if I wanted anything. I deposited my bundle, and sat down by him, suggesting another cup to my health.

"Yes," said he; "I'm thirsty."

For the last time I filled the copper cup to the brim. He drank half, spilled the rest, and trying to rise, fell on his face with his arms stretched out before him, and remained motionless. I ran to my dyke, and, all novice as I was, in less than three-quarters of an hour the stream was firmly barred. It was now a quarter to one.

The deep silence that succeeded the prattling of the cascade alarmed me. I reflected that the King no doubt at his age slept lightly, and that this unusual silence might awake him. In the midst of my anguish there flashed across my mind the scene in the *Barber of Seville*, in which Bartolo awakes when he no longer hears the piano. I slid along the trees to the steps, and looked towards Hadji's quarters. The King was calmly sleeping by the side of his chiboukji. Then I crept to within twenty steps of his pine, listened attentively, and all was still. So I returned to my

dyke, walking in ice-cold water up to my ankles, and leaned over the precipice.

The flank of the mountain seemed to shimmer, thanks to the water that remained in the cavities. I paid great attention to these, so as to avoid putting my feet in them. I returned to the tent, took my herbal, which hung upon the bed, and slung it over my shoulders. Passing by the spot where we had dined, I gathered the remains of the food yet unsoaked by the water, and placed these provisions carefully in my knapsack for the morrow. The dyke still held, and I trusted my road had been dried by the wind. It was nearly two o'clock.

I should have liked to have taken Vasili's dagger, but it was under water, and I spent no time in searching for it. I took off my shoes, tied them together, and then to the straps of my herbal. At last, after having foreseen everything, thrown a last look on my engineering work, thought of my dear home, and sent a kiss in the direction of Athens and Mary-Ann, I put one leg over the parapet, seized hold of a tree that hung over the abyss, and recommended myself to God's care.

It was a hard task, much more so than I had supposed. The half-dry rock felt to the touch

clammy as a serpent's skin. I had ill calculated the distances, and the resting-places were far fewer than I had supposed. Twice I went wrong, by bearing too much to the left. It was a terrible difficulty to regain the right path. Hope frequently abandoned me, but my will remained firm. Once, I lost my footing, having mistaken a shadow for a projection, and I must have fallen fifteen or twenty feet, clinging with my hands and body as much as possible to the rock, but without finding anything to catch hold of. The root of a fig-tree caught in the sleeve of my coat : you can see the mark of it still.

A little further a bird hidden in a hole flew out so suddenly between my legs, that the fright almost made me fall backward. I used my hands and feet, but especially the former. My arms were strained, each muscle seemed to stand out like a cord ; my nails were so painful that the pain numbed my fingers. Perhaps I should have had more strength had I been able to measure the distance yet before me. But when I tried to turn round, I became so giddy that I almost lost consciousness. To keep up my courage, I exhorted myself, and spoke as loud as I could. My teeth chattered.

"Yet one more step for my father's sake, for

Mary-Ann's, and above—above all, for the confusion of that rascal Hadji Stavros!"

At last I placed my feet on a wider platform. It seemed to me that the soil had changed colour. I bent my knees, sat down and timidly turned my head. The stream was only ten feet distant; I had reached the red rocks. A flat surface pierced with little holes, in which the water was still standing, allowed me to take breath and repose myself for a few moments. I drew out my watch—it was only half-past two—and it appeared to me as if I had been three hours reaching thus far. I pinched my arms and legs to see if they were all right. No harm had been done, barring a few bruises and scratches.

My coat hadn't come off so well. I looked up, not as yet to thank heaven, but to see whether anything was moving about the place I had left. I heard nothing but some drops of water filtering through the dyke. All then was going well—all was safe in my rear. I knew the way to Athens: good-bye then to the King of the Mountains!

I was just going to leap to the bottom of the ravine, when a white shape rose before me, and I heard the most horrible bark that ever awoke the echoes. Alas! my dear sir, I had not taken into account Hadji's confounded dogs! These enemies

of man roamed the camp at all hours of the night, and one of them had got scent of me. It is impossible to describe the fury and exasperation I felt at this encounter. I would rather have been face to face with a wolf, a tiger, or a white bear, beasts that might have devoured, but never would have betrayed me. Wild animals hunt game for themselves; how different was the object of this ferocious brute, who was going to devour me noisily for the benefit of old Hadji Stavros? I abused him, called him by every vile name I could think of, but his voice overpowered mine. Then I changed my tactics, and tried the effect of soft words, speaking to him in Greek, the tongue of his fathers: he had but one answer for all my cajoleries, and that answer re-echoed from rock to rock.

A new idea struck me, and I became silent; he did the same. I lay down in a pool of water; he stretched himself growling at the foot of the rock. I pretended to sleep; he appeared to do the same. Then I glided insensibly towards the brook; he rose with a bound, and I had but just time to return to my place. My hat remained in his possession. A moment later, and it was reduced to a pulp. Poor hat! Putting myself in its place, I could not help pitying it. If it had been pos-

sible to get rid of the beast at the cost of some bites, all would have been well; but that kind of monster is not satisfied with biting—it devours.

I reflected that the animal was hungry, and if I could find enough to satisfy him, he would probably bite, but not eat me up. Provisions there were in my herbal, and I sacrificed them, only regretting that I had not a hundred times more. I threw him the half of my bread; he swallowed it at a gulp. I looked pitifully at the little there was still to offer, when I perceived at the bottom of the box a white paper packet which afforded me an idea. It was a small quantity of arsenic meant for my zoological preparations. I used it to stuff birds, but there was nothing to prevent me from giving some to a dog. The brute, whose appetite was excited, evidently desired nothing better than to continue his repast. "Just wait," said I spitefully, "and you'll have a dish of my making!" The packet contained a good dose of the shining powder. I put a few grains into some clear water, and the rest into my pocket. Mixing carefully the animal's portion, I waited until the acid was well dissolved, then dipped a piece of bread into the solution, which sucked it up like a sponge. The dog swallowed it with avidity. Nothing could now save him.

But why had I not strychnine or some instantaneous poison with me, instead of arsenic? It was more than three o'clock, and arsenic takes an unconscionably long time before producing an effect. Towards the half-hour, the dog began to howl violently. That did me no good: barking, howling, cries of rage or anguish would all ascend to the ears of Hadji Stavros and his gang. Soon the animal foamed at the mouth, and writhed in horrible convulsions. I hoped that overcome by pain he would let me pass. But my first attempt to do so rendered him furious. He showed me his blood-stained jaws as if to reproach me, and to say that he would not die unavenged.

I threw him my handkerchief, which was soon torn to pieces like the hat. And now day began to break, and I felt that I had committed a useless act of cruelty, for in an hour's time the brigands would be on my track. Then I lifted my head towards the cursed place I had hoped to have left forever, and to which the watchfulness of a dog would drive me back, when at that moment a formidable cataract falling on my head dashed me to the ground, face downward.

Big pieces of earth, stones, and fragments of rock came upon me, together with a torrent of water. The dyke had given way, and the whole

lake was emptying itself on my devoted head. I was seized with violent trembling. Each wave that passed over me chilled me more and more, and my blood began to get as cold as ice. I looked at the dog; it was still at the foot of the rock fighting against the current, with its jaws wide open, and its eyes glaring at me. It was time to finish with it. I untied my box, took the straps, and with them beat it to death. The torrent caught the body, rolled it over once or twice, and then carried it out of my sight.

I jumped into the water, which came up to my waist. Clinging to the stones, I managed to get out of the current, arrive on the other side, and cried: "Hurrah for Mary-Ann!"

At that instant four brigands, who seemed to rise out of the earth, took me by the collar, saying: "Murderer! Come along, all. We've caught him. The King will be highly pleased, and Vasili will be avenged."

It seems that, without knowing it, I had drowned my poor friend Vasili.

Up to that time, my dear sir, I never had killed a man. Vasili was my first. Since then I've sent many to their account, unwillingly, but only in self-defence. Nevertheless, I have felt remorse only for Vasili, although his end was the

result of a very innocent act of imprudence. You know the true meaning of a first step! No assassin discovered by the police, and taken back to the scene of his crime, ever lowered his head more humbly than I did on that march.

I dared not raise my eyes to those of the men who had taken me. I had not the strength to bear their reproachful glances. Then I foresaw yet a still more terrible ordeal, that of appearing before my judge, and being confronted with my victim. How was I to brave the King's reproachful looks after what I had done? How endure seeing, without dying of shame, the inanimate corpse of the unfortunate Vasili? More than once my knees bent under me, and I should have fallen had not repeated kicks forced me to go on.

I crossed the deserted camp, and the King's cabinet, now occupied by the wounded, and went, or rather tumbled, down the steps to my tent. The water had run off, leaving large stains of mud on the rocks and trees. There was the pool where I had cut away the sod. The brigands, the King, and the monk stood in a circle round a gray muddy object, that chilled me with horror: it was Vasili! Heaven preserve you, my dear sir, from ever beholding a corpse of your own making!

The water and mud had formed a hideous sort

of plaster over the body. Have you ever seen a big fly after it has been some three or four days in a spider's web? The worthy spider, unable to get rid of its prey, covers it with a delicate tissue, which eventually converts it into a sort of ball made of gray threads, which change it into a shapeless mass. Just such a shapeless gray mass had poor Vasili become in a few hours after he had supped with me. I found his body ten steps from the place where I had last wished him good-bye. I am not sure whether they had moved him here, or if he had rolled to this spot in the convulsions of his last agony, yet I think his death must have been an easy one. Drunk as I had left him, he must have succumbed rapidly to congestion of the brain.

My appearance was greeted by a very unreassuring murmur. Hadji, pale, and with knitted brows, came straight to me, seized me by the wrist, and so violently that he nearly put my arm out of joint. Then he threw me so roughly into the middle of the circle, that it was only by a quick backward movement I prevented myself from placing my foot on Vasili's body.

"Look!" cried he, in a voice of thunder; "look what you've done, rejoice over your work, satisfy your eyes by gazing on the victim of your

crime! Wretched man, where will you stop? Who would have said on the day you came here that I was receiving a murderer?"

I uttered some excuses, and tried to prove that I was only guilty of imprudence. I frankly confessed to having made my guard drunk, so as to escape without opposition, but defended myself from the accusation of murder. "Was it my fault if the rising of the water had drowned the man an hour after I had fled?" The best proof that I had not meant to hurt him, lay in the fact that I had not stabbed him when he lay there helpless, although his arms were in my hands. They might look at his body, and assure themselves that there was no trace of a wound.

"At least," said the King, "acknowledge that your imprudence has been great and selfish; and that, when your life was not threatened, when you were kept here only on account of a miserable sum of money, avarice made you escape. You wished to economize a few pounds, and didn't think of the poor devil you left behind you to die. Nor of me either, whom you have deprived of an indispensable officer. And what moment did you choose to injure us in this way? The one in which misfortune assails us on all sides. The hour of my defeat; of the loss of my best soldiers; when

Sophocles is wounded ; the Corfiote dying ; young Spiro, upon whom I counted, dead ; and all my men wearied, discouraged.

" It is at such a time as this that you have the courage to deprive me of Vasili. Have you no human feeling ? Wouldn't it have been a thousand times better to pay your ransom honestly, than to allow it to be said of you that you sacrificed a man's life for a few paltry hundred pounds ?"

" After all," cried I, " you've killed many a one, and for much less."

He replied with dignity : " It is my profession, and not yours. I am a brigand, and you a doctor. I am a Greek, and you—well, you are German."

To this I made no answer, feeling, by the throbbings of my heart, that I was distinctly not born a murderer. The King, encouraged by my silence, raised his voice still more loudly, and continued : " Unfortunate man ! You do not even know to what race he whose death you have caused belonged. He descended from the heroic brigands of Souli, who for years have sustained long wars for their religion and country against Ali of Tebelen, Pasha of Janina. For four generations his ancestors have been hanged or beheaded : not one has died in his bed.

"Not six years ago his brother was executed in Epirus for having assassinated a Mussulman. Devotion and courage are hereditary in that family. Vasili never neglected his religious duties. He gave to the church, to the poor. On Easter Sunday, his taper was always the biggest burning before the icon of the Panagia.* He would rather have died than have feasted on the prescribed fasts, and nothing would have induced him to eat meat on days of abstinence. He was saving up his money to retire into a holy community on Mount Athos. Did you know all this?"

I humbly confessed that I did.

"Did you know that he was the most resolute of my companions? I do not wish to detract from the merit of any of those listening to me, but Vasili's blind devotion, his absolute obedience, and his zeal, were above price.

"No task was beyond his courage, no execution too painful if ordered by me. He would have cut the throat of the entire kingdom if I had told him to do so. For a sign of my little finger, he would have torn out the eyes of his best friend.

"And this is the man you have killed! Poor Vasili! In future, when a village has to be burned,

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* B. Virgin Mary.

a miser to be put on hot iron, a woman to be cut in pieces, or a child to be skinned alive, to whom shall I confide the task?"

The brigands, electrified by this funeral oration, cried unanimously: "To us! To us!" Some stretched out their arms towards the King, others unsheathed their daggers, while the most zealous pointed their pistols at me.

Hadji restrained their enthusiasm, put himself between me and them, and again began to speak —as the Americans would say—to orate.

"Be consoled, O Vasili, thou shalt not rest unavenged. If I listened only to the voice of my grief, the murderer's head should be offered as a sacrifice to thy manes. But it is worth six hundred pounds, and this restrains my hand. If, as formerly, thou couldst take part in our councils, then first, thou wouldst advise me to spare him since vengeance would cost too dear. Surely it would not be fair or just in our actual circumstances to throw away six hundred pounds rashly."

He stopped for a moment and I began to take courage.

"But," he presently burst out afresh, "I know how to conciliate our interests with justice. I shall punish the guilty man without endangering the capital. His punishment will be the most

striking feature of the funeral ceremonies, and from the celestial abode of the Palikars, to which thy soul has flown, thou wilt look down with joy upon an expiation that will cost us nothing."

This peroration transported the audience. All were charmed—but myself. I puzzled my brain in trying to guess what the King reserved for me. No doubt I was lucky not to be killed outright. But I knew the fertility of imagination possessed by these Hellenic gentlemen of the high-road. Hadji Stavros, without killing me, might inflict some punishment that would maim me for life. The old villain refused to tell me what it would be, and manifested so little pity for me that he actually forced me to be present at the interment of his lieutenant.

The body was undressed, taken to the spring, and thoroughly washed. Vasili's features were little altered; his lips still wore the drunkard's meaningless smile, the widely-open eyes had a stupid look. His limbs were yet supple; doubtless you are aware that cadaveric rigidity sets in late in cases of accidental death.

The King's cafedji and his chibouk-bearer assisted in dressing the corpse for burial. Vasili having no relations, his possessions fell to the King, who bore the cost of the funeral cere-

monies. They put on him a fine linen shirt, a cambric kirtle, and a jacket richly embroidered with silver. His damp hair was arranged under a nearly new cap, and they drew red silk gaiters on the stalwart legs, and Russian leather slippers on his feet.

In life Vasili never had been so clean, nor looked so handsome. His lips were tinged with carmine, his face was painted white and red, like that of a young actor on the occasion of his début.

During these operations the orchestra played a certain mournful air you may have often heard in the streets of Athens.

Four brigands began to dig a big hole in the middle of what had been Mrs. Simons's tent, on the very spot where Mary-Ann used to recline. Two others ran to the stores to bring candles, which were distributed among the mourners. I got one like the rest. The monk began to chant the Service for the Dead. Hadji Stavros sang the responses with a firm voice, which thrilled me. There was a slight wind, and the burning wax from my taper fell on my hand. It was not pleasant, but alas! nothing in comparison to what awaited me. If I could have prolonged the ceremony, I would willingly have continued to bear *that* pain.

But it soon came to an end. When the last prayer had been said, the King approached the bier on which the body was laid, and kissed it on the lips. One by one the brigands followed his example. I shivered at the thought of what was coming, and hid myself behind the others; but the King saw me, and cried out: "It is your turn now. Go!—you owe him at least that."

Was this the punishment with which I had been threatened? A just judge would have been satisfied with less. I can tell you, my dear sir, that it is no child's play to kiss the lips of a corpse, especially that of a man you have killed. I advanced to the bier, looked long in the face of the late Vasili, whose staring eyes mocked me, and at last bent my head and touched his mouth. A facetious brigand put his hand on the back of my neck, and held me down. My lips were thus glued to those of the dead body. I felt the contact of the icy teeth, and drew back shuddering with horror, a dreadful and nauseous stench of decay and death clinging to me, the mere thought of which sickens me even now.

Then the body was placed in the ground. They cast upon it quantities of fresh flowers, a loaf, an apple, and some drops of the wine of Ægina. Surely wine was what he least needed.

The grave was soon filled up, more quickly, indeed, than I could have wished.

A brigand observed that two sticks would be wanted to make a cross. Hadji assured him: "You may be sure that Milord's sticks will not be forgotten!" On hearing this my heart stood still with terror. What sticks? What in heaven's name had sticks to do with me?

The King made a sign to his chiboukji, who ran to the offices, and brought back two long laurel switches. Hadji Stavros took the funeral litter, and placed it on the grave. One end rested on the freshly-turned-up earth, while the other was raised. Then he said, smiling: "I'm working for you. Take off your shoes, if you please."

He must have read in my eyes a question full of anguish and alarm, for he continued:

"I'm not a hard man, and have always detested useless severity. That is why I shall punish you in a manner that will dispense with the trouble of watching you in future. For some time, you have been possessed by a regular mania for escaping. But I hope that when you shall have received twenty blows with these sticks on the soles of your feet, you will no longer want a guard, nor care to travel for some time. The punishment is one I am personally acquainted

with, for when I was young the Turks inflicted it on me, and I know from experience that it does not kill. You suffer horribly," the old rascal continued in a pleasant tone, "no doubt, and I warn you that you'll cry out. But Vasili will hear you in his grave, and will bless us for avenging him."

On hearing this, my first idea was to make off while my legs were still able to carry me; but I suppose that my will was paralyzed, for I felt that I could not put one foot before the other. Hadji Stavros rose from the ground light as a feather, and in an instant my shoes were taken off, and I was tightly bound.

It is really impossible for me to say on what they placed my feet, nor how at the first blow they prevented me from violently drawing them up to the level of my head. I saw the two sticks revolving, one to the right, the other to the left, shut my eyes, and waited. But not for long—less than a second; yet I had time to invoke a blessing on my father, send a kiss to Mary-Ann, and call down a thousand imprecations on the heads of Mrs. Simons and John Harris.

I did not lose consciousness one instant; as I told you, it is a faculty I do not as yet possess; so nothing was spared me. I felt all the blows, one after the other. The first was so heavy, I thought

that all was up with me. It took me on the middle of the sole of the feet, near the little arch that precedes the heel, and supports the full weight of the body. It was not the feet that hurt me that time, but I fancied that the bones of my poor legs would break in pieces. The second touched me lower down, just under the heel. It gave me a violent shock, which shook the spinal column, and had such an effect on the brain that I thought my head would burst open. The third came down on the toes, and produced a sharp, darting sensation, which ran up all the front of my body, until it seemed as if the point of the stick had struck the tip of my nose.

It was at this moment, I suppose, that the blood began to pour. The blows succeeded each other in the same order and places at regular intervals. I had courage enough to bear the first two silently ; I cried out at the third, howled at the fourth, and groaned at the following. At the tenth my flesh became numbed, and I was silent.

But the prostration of my physical strength did not diminish the clearness of my perceptions. I would have been incapable of raising my eyelids, yet my sense of hearing was only too acute. I didn't lose a word of what was said around me. I shall remember that later when I practise medi-

cine. Doctors often condemn a patient at a few steps from his bed without reflecting that the poor devil perhaps can hear every word they utter. I heard a young brigand say to Hadji : " He's dead ! why trouble the men for nothing ?" But the Chief replied : " Not a bit of it. I've borne sixty blows, and two days afterward I was dancing the Romaïka !"

" How was it managed ?"

" I used the salve of an Italian renegade called Luigi-Bey. Where are we ? How many blows ?"

" Seventeen."

" Still three more, my sons, and let them be good ones."

But the stick had done its work, and the last blows fell on a bloody but insensible surface. Pain had almost paralyzed me.

They lifted me off the litter, undid my cords, wrapped my feet in cold-water bandages, and as I was fearfully thirsty, gave me a large glass of wine. Anger returned before my strength. I don't know whether you are like me, but I think there is nothing so humiliating as corporal punishment. I can't endure the thought that man, the ruler of the world, can for a moment be mastered by a stick.

To be born in the nineteenth century, subdue steam and electricity, possess a good half of the

secrets of nature, know all that science has invented for the good and safety of humanity, know how to cure fever, small-pox, and a host of other diseases, and yet not be able to defend oneself from the degrading contact of a stick! The very idea is maddening. If I had been a soldier, and sentenced to a flogging, most certainly I should have killed some one.

When I saw myself seated on the muddy ground, my feet immovable from pain, my hands dead; when I saw round me the brutes that had beaten me, and those who had seen me beaten, anger, shame, a feeling of outraged dignity, of violated justice, inspired my weak frame with a sense of hatred, revolt, and with a keen desire for revenge. Interest, prudence, my future, were all forgotten, and I gave vent to the torrent of burning indignation that rushed to my lips, and I literally foamed with rage.

I am not an orator, and my solitary studies have not helped to render me eloquent, but indignation, which has sometimes inspired poets, lent me for a short fifteen minutes the savage eloquence of those Calabrian prisoners who with their last breath overwhelmed their Roman conquerors with insult. I told Hadji all that could wound a man's pride, and hurt his most tender feelings: said that

he was not worthy of the name of man, and could only be counted among wild beasts. Like an Eastern, I cursed his wife, his child, all his descendants. In fact, memory fails me to repeat all that I said to him. Words came to me that are found in no dictionary, yet were understood by my hearers, for they made them smart like hounds under the huntsman's lash. But vainly did I seek in the old Palikar's face any trace of emotion.

Hadji Stavros didn't flinch any more than a marble bust under my torrent of invective. He answered all my insults by a look of profound contempt. His stolidity maddened me. For an instant I lost my head, rose quickly to my wounded feet, snatched a pistol from the sash of a brigand, cocked it, and aimed straight at the King. It went off, and calling out, "I am avenged!" I fell backward.

The King himself picked me up. I looked at him with a horror as great as though I had seen him rise out of the infernal regions. He was in no way moved, and smiled quietly like an immortal. And yet, my dear sir, I had touched him. My ball had hit him in the forehead, an inch above the left brow, and it had left a bloody mark. But, either the weapon was badly loaded, the powder worthless, or the ball had but glanced along

the bone of the skull—for some reason or another, the wound was but a mere scratch.

The invulnerable monster laid me quietly on the ground, bent over me, pinched my ear, and said: "Why do you attempt the impossible, young man? Haven't I told you that I am proof against balls?—and you know that I never lie. Have you never heard that Ibrahim tried to get me shot by seven Egyptians, but in vain? I hope you don't think yourself cleverer than they? But you're a precious quick hand for a man from the North! So much the worse for you. By God! if my mother, whom you've just been abusing, had not given me a solid frame, you'd have made an end of me! Any other in my place would have turned up his toes without a word. But these affairs make me younger, and recall the good old time. At your age I risked my life four times a day, and digested the better for it. So, I bear you no ill-will: quite the contrary.

"But, as all my men are not ball-proof, and you might indulge in some new imprudence, we'll apply to your hands the same treatment as to your feet. Nothing need prevent us from beginning at once, yet out of consideration to your health, I'll wait until to-morrow. You see the stick is a useful weapon, which does not kill; and

you have proved that a bastinadoed man can do the work of two who never have undergone that treatment. The ceremony of to-morrow will give you occupation. Prisoners don't know how to pass their time. 'Tis sheer idleness that has made you turn so savage. Besides, be not alarmed; as soon as your ransom comes, I'll cure your scratches with some of Luigi-Bey's salve I still have by me. You'll be all right in a couple of days, and able to dance at the Palace ball without letting your partners know that you have been thrashed."

I'm no Greek, and insults wound me as much as blows, so I showed the old villain my fist, and cried: "No; you rascal, my ransom never will be paid. I've asked no one for money. You'll only have my head, which will be of no good to you. Take it at once if you like. That will be doing me a service and you too. You'll spare me two weeks of torture, and of the sickening sight of yourself, besides economizing my food. Do not fail to do it: it's the only profit you can make out of me."

He smiled and shrugged his shoulders. "Now, now! softly! All young people are the same: always in extremes. They lose courage at once. If I listened to you, I should regret it in a week, and you too. The Englishwomen will pay, I'm

certain. I know women, although I've been so long a hermit. What would be said if I killed you to-day, and your ransom came to me to-morrow? It would be known that I had not kept my word, and my future prisoners would let their throats be cut like lambs, without even trying to get their ransoms. No; I'll not spoil the trade like that!"

"Ah! you think that the Englishwomen have paid you? You're too clever by half; they have paid you as you deserved."

"You are very good."

"Their ransom will cost you three thousand six hundred pounds, do you hear? Out of your own pocket."

"Don't say such things, else I shall think you were thrashed on the head."

"I say what is true. Do you remember the name of your prisoners?"

"No; but I've written it down."

"I'll help your memory: the lady's name was Mrs. Simons."

"Well."

"Partner in the house of Barclay in London."

"My banker?"

"Precisely."

"How do you know the name of my banker?" cried the amazed monarch of the mountains.

"May I first ask you why you dictated your correspondence in my presence?" I replied quietly.

"What does it matter?" the King continued after a pause. "They can't rob me; they are not Greeks, but English. There are the Courts. I'll go to law."

"And be beaten. They have a receipt."

"That's true. By what fatality did I give them a receipt?"

"Because I advised you to do so, you old fool!"

"Miserable dog! Infernal schismatic!" raved Hadji. "I am ruined, betrayed, robbed! Three thousand six hundred pounds! I'm responsible. If the Barclays were the Company's bankers, I should only lose my share. But they have my private capital, and all must go. Are you sure that she is a partner in Barclay's bank?"

"As sure as that I shall die to-day."

"No; you won't die before to-morrow. You've not suffered enough. You must suffer to the extent of three thousand six hundred pounds! What torture can I invent? Three thousand six hundred deaths would be too few! What did I do to the traitor who robbed me of less than that?

A mere nothing! He howled for a couple of hours or so. But, after all, there might be two firms of the same name?"

"At 31 Cavendish Square?" I asked sneeringly.

"Yes, that is the address," the King went on furiously. "Idiot, instead of betraying, why did you not warn me? I would have asked double: they would have paid; they have the means. I should not have given a receipt—I'll give no more. No; it's the last time. 'Received four thousand pounds from Mrs. Simons.' What an idiotic phrase! Did I really dictate it? But now I think of it, there was no signature, only my seal; that's the same thing!—They have twenty letters of mine. Why did you ask for this receipt? What do you expect from these women? Six hundred pounds for your ransom: selfishness always, and everywhere! Why didn't you confide in me? I'd have let you off for nothing, even paid you. If you are poor, you must know the worth of money.

"Can you imagine to yourself how much that means—three thousand six hundred pounds? What it would look like in a room? How many gold pieces that makes? How much one can make with such a sum? Why, it's a fortune.

You've robbed me of a fortune! Despoiled my daughter, the only being I love in the world. It is for her I work. But since you know so much, you know that I don't make half the money in a year. You've robbed me of two years of life. It's just as if I'd gone to sleep all that time!"

I had at last found the vulnerable spot. The old Palikar was touched to the heart. I knew that I was lost, and hoped for no favour. But I felt a bitter joy in troubling the serenity of this man of stone. I watched his convulsive movements of passion as does the shipwrecked mariner the wave that is to engulf him. I was like Pascal's thinking reed that brutal matter crushes, but which consoles itself in dying by the proud consciousness of its superiority. I said to myself: "I shall perish in the midst of tortures, but I am stronger than my tyrant, and am able to inflict punishment on my executioner."

CHAPTER VII

JOHN HARRIS

His Majesty, King Stavros, absolutely gloated over his revenge, just as a man who has fasted for days would over the preparation of his initial meal. He appeared to take mental stock of his favourite methods of torture, and eyed me meanwhile with an uncanny expression that was the reverse of reassuring. He seemed in some quandary to make up his mind as to which to begin with so as to give me the greatest pain. Presently he clapped his head with his fist as if he imagined thereby to produce an idea. For the matter of that, ideas such as they were came rapidly enough, but so incoherently that it was difficult to devise from his expression what he intended doing.

"Speak, can't you?" cried he savagely to his men. "Tell me what to do. What the devil's the good of you if you can't even make a suggestion? Must I wait till the fellow from Corfu returns, or until Vasili rises from his grave?

Brutes, beasts, idiots that you are! invent me a torture wherewith to punish this rascal as he deserves."

The young chiboukji spoke first. Addressing his master, he said: "I've an idea. One officer is dead, another absent, a third wounded. Let us compete for their late places, and promise that the one who suggests the best torment shall succeed to the honors of Sophocles, the Corfiote, and of Vasili."

Hadji Stavros smiled sardonically at this proposal, and tapping the lad's smooth cheek affectionately, answered: "You're ambitious, little one. So much the better. Ambition is the mainspring of courage. We'll do as you suggest. It's a progressive—a European idea, and pleases me. To reward you, speak first, and if your inventive genius is worthy of the honour, you shall replace Vasili."

"I should like to draw some of Milord's teeth, put a bit in his mouth, and then make him run until he drops."

"His feet are too sore, he would tumble down immediately," answered the King sarcastically; "that won't do. Let some one else try."

"I," broke in Caltzida, "would break burning-hot eggs under his arm-pits. I tried that once on

a woman of Megara, and I tell you it was good fun to watch her agony!"

"As for me!" cried Tambouris, "I'd lay him on the ground with a stone weighing five hundred pounds on his chest. It makes a fellow stick his tongue out and spit blood; it is an excellent idea, I assure you."

Milatis suggested injecting vinegar up the nostrils, and thrusting thorns under the nails, and declared that, thanks to these pleasant operations, the patient "sneezed without stopping, and didn't know what to do with his hands."

Moustakas was one of the cooks of the band, and his suggestion was possibly inspired by his profession. He was kind enough to wish to roast me by slow degrees, and this brilliant and humane suggestion evidently met with the King's approbation.

The monk assisted at the conference, but did not give any sort of advice. Nevertheless to a certain extent he had pity on me, and within the limit of his intelligence came to my assistance.

"Moustakas," said he gently, "is too cruel. The Milord can be tortured without being burned alive. If you feed him with salt meat and give him nothing to drink, he'd last a long time, and suffer enough to satisfy you. Thus the King

might reap his vengeance without offending God. My advice is quite disinterested, I gain nothing either way; but since you paid the tithe, I should like everybody to be satisfied."

"Hold your peace!" interrupted the cafedji angrily. "I've a better idea than that. I want the Milord to die of hunger. The others can do what they like to him—the worse the better. But I'll keep guard over his mouth; not a crumb of bread or a drop of water shall pass his lips. Fatigue will make him ravenous, the wounds give him a burning thirst, and all the others do to him will help on my work admirably. What say you, O King? Is not my idea better than all the rest?—and shall I replace Vasili?"

"Go to the devil, all of you!" was the surly answer. "You would not talk so pleasantly if he'd robbed you of three thousand six hundred pounds. Take him away to the camp, and do with him what you like. But if one of you kills him by mistake, let him beware! The cursed dog shall die by my own hand, so that I may have some satisfaction for the loss of my money. I will shed his blood drop by drop, and watch his agony myself."

You can't imagine, my dear friend, how, when in imminent danger of loss of it, even the most

miserable wretch clings to life! No doubt I wished in a sense to die at once and not in lingering torments; but, on the other hand, a still, small voice seemed to bid me take heart even after these terrible words of the brigand King. They would give me time to think. A sort of vague hope thrilled my heart, and if at that moment a charitable soul had offered to blow my brains out, I should have expressed some hesitation before accepting the offer.

Four brigands now seized hold of my head and legs, and carried me out of the King's cabinet. At this I bawled with pain, and my voice awoke Sophocles lying on his miserable truckle-bed. He called to his friends, asked them what was going on, and begged to have a nearer view of me. As this was evidently the caprice of a sick man, they threw me by his side.

"Milord, we're both of us down on our luck, but I'd back myself to get out of this sooner than you. It seems that they're already thinking of giving me a successor. Men are so unjust! My place is to be competed for. Well, I'll take part in the competition too, and you can be a witness in my favour. Your groans will proclaim that Sophocles is not yet dead. You're going to be bound, and I swear I'll torment you with my

one hand as well as any of the others with their two."

To please the villain my arms were tied together. He turned towards me, and began pulling out my hairs, one by one, with the patience and regularity of a professional depilator. When I realized the nature of this torment, I thought that the man, touched by my misfortunes and softened by his own sufferings, wished to get me away from the others in order the better to give me some measure of relief. The extraction of a hair is not nearly so painful as a pin's prick. The first twenty went without causing me much discomfort. But very soon I had to change my tune.

The skin of the head, irritated by a number of imperceptible lesions, became inflamed. An itching, at first slight, then more pronounced, and at last intolerable, maddened me. When I tried to touch my head, I understood why the brute had ordered my arms to be bound. Impatience only increased the suffering by driving the blood to the surface.

Each time that Sophocles' hand approached my hair a shudder of pain coursed through my entire frame. It seemed as if my arms and legs were being pricked with thousands of pins and

needles. The nervous system, irritated at all points, made my whole body ache as though I had been confined in the poisoned tunic of Dejanira. I rolled on the ground, cried out, implored pardon, and regretted even the bastinado; but my tormentor continued until his strength failed him. When he felt his head becoming heavy and his arm tired, he tore out a whole handful of hair at once, and fell back on his bed, leaving me howling dismally with agony.

"Now," cried Moustakas, "it's my turn. You'll decide, by the light of my fire, if I cannot beat Sophocles, and if I do not deserve to be raised to the rank of lieutenant."

He lifted me like a feather and carried me into the camp, where he placed me before a heap of resinous wood and dried bracken. Then my cords were untied, and my clothes taken off, leaving only my trousers.

"Now," said he, "you'll be my scullion. We're going to make a rare blaze, and cook the King's dinner."

He put a light to the wood, and laid me on my back, about two steps from the flaming mass. The wood crackled, and the burning sparks fell in showers round me—the heat was intolerable. I dragged myself on my hands a little distance off,

but he returned with a frying-pan, and kicked me back to the place I had left.

"Look at me well," said he, "and profit by my words of wisdom. Here are the tit-bits of no less than three lambs, enough to feed twenty men, which we are about to stew. The King will choose the most delicate pieces for himself, and the rest will be given to his friends. As you're not one of these, all you will be allowed to do will be to feast your eyes."

The meat hissed in the pan, and the noise and smell reminded me that I had eaten nothing since the day before. And thus was hunger added to my torments. Moustakas put the frying-pan to my nose, to show me what a lovely colour the meat had acquired, and how temptingly it smelt!

Suddenly he found out that he had forgotten the seasoning, and ran off to fetch pepper and salt, leaving the frying-pan in my care. The first thing I thought of was to snatch a piece of meat and devour it, but the brigands were only a few steps off, and would have prevented me. "If only," said I to myself, "I still had my packet of arsenic! What can I have done with it?" I had not put it back in my box. Plunging my two hands into my pockets, I drew out a dirty piece of paper and the remains of the lucky powder,

which might perhaps save and would certainly avenge me.

Moustakas returned at the moment I was holding my right hand over the frying-pan. He seized my arm, looked me straight in the face, and cried with a threatening voice: "I know what you've done!"

I let fall my arm, and he continued: "Yes; you've done something to the King's dinner!"

"What?"

"You've bewitched it, but that is not much matter. My poor Milord! Hadji Stavros is a greater sorcerer than you. I'm going to serve his dinner, and shall have my share, and you—but you'll get devil a bit."

"I hope you'll enjoy it," I replied drearily. My head and body ached excruciatingly.

He left me before the fire, telling a dozen brigands, who were munching brown bread and olives, to watch me. These Spartans stayed with me for a couple of hours. They kept up the fire, and if I tried to get a little away from it, cried out: "Take care, you'll catch a cold!" and then pushed me by means of burning logs of wood back to my place.

My back was by this time covered with red spots, my skin rose everywhere in blisters, my

eyelashes curled up with the heat, and my hair as well as the whole of my body smelt of burning flesh. Nevertheless I rubbed my hands with delight at the thought that the King would eat my dish, and that before the end of the meal something unpleasant would be sure to happen in the camp.

Soon Hadji's guests began to return, well-fed, and smiling with the look of men who had enjoyed their dinner.

"Ah!" thought I, "your joy won't last long; you'll soon be making wry faces, and cursing the feast I seasoned for you!"

Even Locusta must have enjoyed a few enviable hours. I really felt almost cheerful at the thought of what was before me.

My charitable cogitations were presently interrupted by a singular tumult. The dogs barked frantically, as a breathless messenger rushed suddenly into the camp, followed by the whole pack in hot pursuit. It was Dimitrius, the son of Christodulos. Some stones thrown by the brigands delivered him from his pursuers, and so soon as he could make himself intelligible, he cried out: "The King! I must speak to the King." When he came nearer I called him in a lamentable voice, and, alarmed at the state in which he

saw me, he exclaimed: "Poor, poor girl! the fools! Poor girl!"

"My dear Dimitrius," said I, "where do you come from? Is my ransom paid?"

"There's no question of ransom. But all the same I bring good news. Good for you, bad for him, for her, for every one. I must see Hadji Stavros, there is not a minute to lose. Until my return they must not for their lives hurt a hair of your head." Then turning to the brigands, he cried out: "Do you hear? Don't touch Milord, it's more than your life is worth. The King would have you cut to pieces if you scratched him even. Lead me to him."

It's the way of the world; a man who speaks with the tone of a master is nearly sure to be obeyed. There was so much authority in this servant's manner, his earnestness rendered him so imperious, that my guardians were stupefied, even amazed, and actually forgot to keep me near the fire. I crawled a short distance and awaited, resting on a cool rock, the arrival of Hadji Stavros.

When he appeared he was apparently as greatly moved and agitated as Dimitrius. He took me in his arms as if I were a child, carried me straight to the very spot where Vasili was buried, placed me on his own carpet carefully, and taking two

steps backward gazed at me with a look of mingled hatred and pity.

"My son," said he to Dimitrius, "it's the first time that I shall have left such a crime unpunished. He tried to murder me: I forgive him. But the dog has robbed me. Three thousand six hundred pounds of Photini's dowry! I sought a punishment equal to his crime, and should have found it, you may be sure of that.

"But, miserable wretch that I am, why didn't I control my anger? I've been very hard upon him, and it is she who will pay for it. If she received twenty blows on her little feet, I never should see her again. A man does not die of that sort of thing—but a woman!—a child of fifteen!"—and he began to cry bitterly.

When he recovered himself a little he sent off the men who were pressing round us, undid gently the blood-soaked linen that covered my wounds, and sent his chiboukji for Luigi-Bey's pomade. Seated on the damp grass, he took my feet between his hands, looked at them, and, incredible to relate, with eyes filled with tears he began to chafe them almost tenderly.

"My poor friend," he said, "you must be suffering cruelly. Forgive me! I'm an old brute, a mountain bear, a Palikar. Since my youth I've

been inured to ferocity. But you see I've a good heart, since I regret what has occurred. I suffer more than you, for your eyes are dry, and I am weeping. You shall be free at once; or rather, no, you can't leave here in your present condition. I must first cure you. The balm is a sovereign remedy. I'll nurse you as if you were my son, and you will soon be well again. You must be able to walk to-morrow. She can't remain any longer in your friend's hands.

"I implore you," he continued excitedly, "not to mention our quarrel of to-day to any one. You know personally I never hated you. I have often told you so. You were even sympathetic to me, and I gave you my confidence, told you my most important secrets. Remember that we were a pair of friends until Vasili's death. An instant of impatience must not make you forget my precious kindness. You wouldn't drive a father to despair. You're a good young man, and I believe your friend must also be a good fellow."

"Of whom are you talking?"

"Of whom? Why, this accursed Harris—this infernal American—this execrable pirate—this child-stealer—this infamous wretch that I should like to hold, and you, too, in my hands, that I might scrunch your brains out and scatter them to

the dogs! You Europeans are all alike—a race of traitors, only attacking creatures weaker than themselves. Read what he says, and tell me if there are any tortures cruel enough to punish such a crime?"

He threw me furiously a crumpled letter, and I read:

"*Sunday, May* 11.
"*On board the* 'Fancy' *in*
"*Salamis Roads.*

"HADJI STAVROS:

"Photini is on board my ship, which is fully armed.

"I shall hold her as a hostage so long as Hermann Schultz is your prisoner. As you treat my friend, so shall I treat your daughter. She shall pay an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a head for a head.

"Send me an answer at once, or I shall start, and then beware.

"JOHN HARRIS."

On reading this document I could not restrain myself from crying with joy: "What a good fellow!" said I aloud, "and I cursed him! But tell me, Dimitrius, why he did not help me sooner?"

"Because he was away, sir; he was pursuing some pirates. Unfortunately for us, he only re-

turned yesterday morning. Ah! why didn't he stay away altogether?"

"Good old chap—he has not lost a day!" I answered delightedly. "But how did he discover this old villain's daughter?"

"Why, she was in our house, Mr. Hermann. You know her well. You've dined with her more than once. She's Photini."

"What! Photini! That flat-nosed school-girl who ogled John Harris was then the daughter of the brigand!" Between ourselves—I thought that she had been taken away without much difficulty.

The chiboukji returned with a bundle of linen and a bottle filled with yellowish salve. The King dressed my feet like a practised hand, and I was immediately relieved. Hadji offered at this moment an interesting psychological study. There was brutality in his look—softness in his hands. He rolled the bandages round my ankle so gently that I hardly felt his touch, but his eyes said clearly: "How I should like to pass a cord round your neck!" He fastened the pins as lightly as a woman; but how much more willingly he would have stabbed me to the heart!

When he had finished dressing my feet, he held out his hand towards the sea, and shaking it menacingly, cried with a savage roar: "Am I then no

longer King, that I cannot satisfy my fury? Must I, who have always commanded, now obey a threat? I, before whom a million of men tremble—am afraid! They'll boast, no doubt, and proclaim it to the world. How can I impose silence on those chattering Europeans? It will be put in the papers, perhaps even in books. But I deserve it! Why did I marry? Ought a man of my sort to have children? I was born to slaughter soldiers, not to nurse little girls.

"Well may John Harris laugh at me," he continued. "But what if I declared war—if I boarded his vessel by surprise? Many and many a one have I surprised like that when I was a pirate; and this without asking whether they had guns or not.

"But my daughter was not on board!—my dear little girl! You know her then, Mr. Hermann? Why didn't you tell me that you lived with Christodulos? I would have asked nothing from you, but have set you free at once for Photini's sake. I wish her to learn your language. Sooner or later she will be a German Princess. Won't she make a charming one? But, now I think of it, you'll beseech your friend not to harm her. Would you have the heart to make my Photini cry? She has done you no harm. If any one

is to expiate your sufferings, it should be me. Tell your friend that you have hurt your feet on the stony roads, then do what you like to me!"

Dimitrius stopped this torrent of words. "It's a great pity," said he, "Mr. Hermann is wounded. Photini is not safe among those heretics, and I know Mr. Harris; he is capable of anything."

The King knitted his brows; both the honour and heart of the father were in question.

"Leave at once," said he: "if necessary, I'll carry you to the foot of the mountain. You'll wait in some village for a horse, a carriage, a litter; I'll provide what is required. But let your friend know to-day that you are free, and promise me, on the head of your mother, that you will tell no one of what has been done to you."

I did not quite know how I could support the fatigue of the move, but preferred anything to remaining with my tormentors. I was truly afraid that some new obstacle might rise between myself and liberty. So I answered: "Let us leave at once; and I swear by all that is most sacred, not a hair of your child's head shall be touched."

He took me in his arms, threw me across his shoulders, and mounted the steps. The whole band ran towards him and barred our passage. Moustakas, livid as a cholera patient, cried:

"Where are you going? The German bewitched the food, and we are all suffering like so many devils in hell; but he shall die for it!"

On hearing this, my hopes vanished. The coming of Dimitrius, the providential interruption of Harris, the sudden change in the King, the humiliation of this proud head before his prisoner—all these incidents crowded into the last quarter of an hour, had troubled my brain. I was forgetting the past, and thinking only of the future.

The sight of Moustakas recalled the poison to my mind. I felt that every moment was bringing us nearer to a catastrophe, and clung with all my might to the King. I pressed my arms round his neck, and implored him to carry me away at once.

"Your reputation is concerned," said I. "Prove to these madmen that you are their master. Give no answer, words are useless. Pass over their bodies, if we must. You do not know how important my safety is to you. Your daughter loves John Harris: I know it!"

He put me down gently, and with closed fists ran towards the brigands. "Madmen! The first who touches the Milord will have to answer to me. What the devil do you mean by bewitching the meat? Didn't I eat it too?—and am I ill? Let

him leave this—he's an honest man, and my friend."

Hardly had he said the words, when a change stole over his face, and his legs bent under him. He sat down near me, and whispered, with more regret than anger: "What confidence! Why didn't you warn me that you had poisoned us?"

Seizing his hand I found it cold. His features were discomposed, his skin had assumed an earthy tint. On seeing this, I lost courage entirely, and felt as if all were over. There was nothing more to hope for. Hadn't I, with my own hand, killed the only man whose interest it was to save me? My head fell on my breast, and I remained inert by the side of the livid, suffering old man.

Already Moustakas and some of the others had thrust forth their hands to seize me. Hadji had no longer strength to prevent them. At intervals a violent spasm shook his big frame as does the woodman's axe a century-old oak. The brigands believed him to be dying, and the bonds of interest, fear, hope, or gratitude that attached them to their chief broke as the fragile threads of a spider's web. The Greeks are the most unyielding race in the world.

Their enormous and absurd vanity bends sometimes, but like a spring only to fly back at the first

moment. They know how to lean on a strong, or follow modestly in the steps of a clever, man, but they never forgive the master who has protected or enriched them. For the last thirty centuries they have been a people composed of selfish and jealous unities, brought together by necessity, but one that no human power will ever be able to weld into a whole.

Hadji Stavros learned to his cost that one does not command sixty Greeks with impunity. His authority did not for an instant survive his moral vigour and physical strength. Besides the sick men, who shook their fists at us and cursed us as the cause of their sufferings, those who were well, grouped themselves round a big, brutal peasant named Colidza, opposite the King. He was the most talkative and shameless of the band, an impudent brute without talent or courage; in short, he was one of those cowards who hide during a fight, and afterward carry high the flag of victory. But, at certain moments, fortune favours the most contemptible. Colidza, proud of the strength of his lungs, proceeded to overwhelm the King with insult, and reminded me of the grave-digger who heaps earth over the dead.

"So then," cried he, "there you are, clever man, invincible general, all-powerful King, invul-

nerable mortal! Your glory was not usurped, and we were right to believe in you. And what have you gained by it? What good have you got? You gave us fifty-four miserable francs a month, the pay of a mercenary. You've fed us with black bread and mouldy cheese that the dogs would have refused, while you were making your fortune, and sending whole ships full of gold to foreign banks. What have we gained from all our victories, and the noble blood we have shed in these mountains? Nothing! You kept all—booty, spoils, and prisoners' ransoms!

"It is true that you left us the bayonet-thrusts; the only things of which you never took your share. I have served you two years, and been wounded fourteen times in the back, and you haven't a single scar to show us. If even you had been a skilful leader, had chosen good opportunities, where there is little to risk and much to gain! But, on the contrary, you caused us to be thrashed by the Line; you've been the ruin of your comrades, and led us into the lion's mouth. You were then in a hurry to finish with it all and retire? You wanted us all to be killed, like Vasili, since you've delivered us up to this cursed Milord, who has bewitched our bravest soldiers.

"But do not imagine you will escape our

vengeance. I know why you want him to leave: he has paid his ransom. But what do you want with the money? You can't take it into the other world? And you look very sick, my poor Hadji Stavros. The Milord hasn't spared you any more than us; you'll die too, for it is but just you should die.

"My friends," he continued, turning to his men, "let us begin by throwing the old man and his dear Milord into the ravine; and afterward, I'll tell you what to do."

The assembly loudly applauded this proposal, and Colidza's eloquence nearly cost us our lives. Hadji's old companions, ten or twelve devoted Palikars, who would have come to his aid, had eaten the remains of his repast, and were contorting in frightful tortures on the ground. But a popular orator invariably excites jealousy, and when it seemed clear that Colidza would be elected chief of the band, Tambouris and several others of the more ambitious, turned suddenly round and ranged themselves on our side.

Captain for captain, they preferred he who had led them so well, to this prating fool whose pomposity they despised. They imagined also that the King had not long to live, and that he would choose his successor from among those

who remained faithful to him. And this was no unimportant point, since it would be safe to bet that the capitalists would ratify the choice of Hadji Stavros, rather than one made by the rebels. Eight or ten voices were consequently now lifted in our favour. I say "ours," for in future we made but one. I clung to the King, and he put an arm round my neck.

Tambouris and his friends came to a rapid decision. A plan of defence was improvised. Three men took advantage of the tumult to run with Dimitrius to the arsenal of the robbers, to get arms and cartridges, and to lay across the path a long train of powder. They returned quietly and mixed with the crowd.

The division between the two parties now became more and more defined, and insults flew from group to group. Our champions, their backs turned to Mary-Ann's room, guarded the steps, throwing back the enemy on the King's office, and making a rampart between us with their bodies. Suddenly a line of fire ran along the ground, and the rock exploded with a frightful noise.

Colidza and his partisans, surprised by the detonation, ran in a body towards the arsenal. Then Tambouris, without losing a minute, took

up Hadji, flew down the steps, and in two strides placed him in safety. Then he returned, and carried me to where the King was, and deposited me by his side. Our friends entrenched themselves in the room, cut down some trees, barricaded the steps, and organized a thorough defence before Colidza had recovered from his amazement.

Then we counted our forces. Our army was composed of the King, Tambouris, eight other brigands, Dimitrius, and myself—altogether fourteen men, of whom three were useless. The cafedji, like his master, had taken poison, and was beginning to feel its effects. But we had two guns each, and a profusion of cartridges, while the enemy had only the arms and ammunition they carried about them, but they had the best of position and numbers. We didn't exactly know how many fighting men they had, but counted at least upon twenty-five or thirty assailants.

I need not describe to you the beleaguered fortress, you have so often heard of it. Nevertheless, the aspect of the place had singularly changed since the day I breakfasted there for the first time with Mrs. Simons and Mary-Ann, under watchful vigilance of the Corfiote. Our fine trees were uprooted, and the nightingales had fled.

But to return to things more material, we

were defended to the right and left by inaccessible rocks, which even our enemies could not scale. They attacked us from the King's cabinet above, and watched us from the ravine. On one side their fire plunged down upon us, on the other we commanded their sentinels; but the distance was so great, that it was not worth while to waste powder and shot.

If Colidza and his friends had had the least idea of strategy, they could easily have made an end of us. It was only necessary to carry the barricade, enter by force, and back us up against a wall, or throw us into the ravine. But the idiot, who had two men for our one, spared his ammunition and covered his advance with twenty men who did not know how to shoot. Our fellows were not much better, but they were at least obedient, and properly commanded. Before night they accounted for five or six of the enemy.

The combatants all knew each other by name. They shouted to one another from afar, like the heroes of Homer. One man tried to improve an old acquaintance by aiming at him, and was answered by a speech and a ball. In fact, the fight was but an armed discussion, in which, from time to time, powder had its share.

As for me, stretched on my back as I was in a

corner, sheltered from the balls, I tried to undo my fatal work, and recall to life the King of the Mountains. He complained of a burning thirst, and of a violent pain in the stomach, and he had, moreover, a terrible contraction in his ice-cold hands and feet. The pulse was low, the breathing painful. The stomach appeared to labour with a strange substance it could not belch. Yet he had lost none of his vivacity or presence of mind, while his piercing eyes gazed towards the Salamis road, as if trying to discern Photini's floating prison.

Squeezing his hand round mine, he said: "Cure me, my son. You are a doctor, and should know how. I don't reproach you. Right was on your side. You were justified in killing me, for I swear to you that without your friend Harris nothing could have saved you. Is there nothing to extinguish this fire which devours me? I don't care to live, I've had enough of it; but if I die they'll kill you, and Photini will be massacred. Ah! how I suffer! Feel my hands, they seem as if they did not belong to me. But do you think this American will execute his threats? What were you saying a short time since?—that Photini loves him. The wretched girl! I who have had her educated like a King's daughter! I

would rather see her dead than—But no! I'm glad, after all, that she loves the young man—he will have pity on her.

"What are you to him? A friend; nothing more; not even his countryman. One has as many friends as one likes, but there are not two women in the whole world like Photini. If it would be any advantage to me, I'd strangle all my friends, but I could not kill a woman who loved me. If at least she only knew how rich she is! Americans are, they say, very matter-of-fact and practical. But the poor lamb knows nothing of her fortune—I ought to have told her. How can I let him know that she will have four millions of francs? And we are the prisoners of a brute like Colidza! Cure me, cure me, for the sake of the saints in Paradise, that I may crush the reptile!"

I am not a doctor, and only know so much of toxicology as is to be learned from elementary treatises, yet I remembered that poisoning by arsenic might be cured by a method much resembling that practised by the celebrated Doctor Sangrado. I tickled the patient's gullet; my fingers answered the purpose of an emetic, and soon I began to hope that he had got rid of the greater part of the poison. The phenomena of reaction

soon set in. The skin burned, the pulse was quicker, the face was a little coloured, and the eyes slightly injected with blood. I asked him if one of his men could bleed him?

He answered by binding his own arm, and in the midst of the noise of the shooting and the balls that spattered us with dust, he opened a vein, drew a large quantity of blood, and then in a quiet voice asked me what else there was to do? I told him to drink, and to drink incessantly, until all the particles of arsenic were carried away.

Fortunately, the skin of white wine, which had caused Vasili's death, was still there. This, mixed with water, brought him back to life. He obeyed me like a child, and I do believe that at the first cup I gave him, the poor sick old King tried to kiss my hand.

Towards ten in the evening he was better, but the cafedji was dead. He had not been able to get rid of the poison, nor to become warm. So he was thrown from the top of the cascade into the ravine. All our defenders were well and unwounded, but ravenous as starving wolves in winter. I had not eaten for twenty-four hours, and was craving for food. Out of sheer bravado, the enemy passed the night feasting and in jollity—making a devilish row. They threw us gnawed

mutton-bones and empty wine-skins, and our people returned the compliment by a stray shot or so. We heard cries, both of rejoicing and death. Colidza was drunk ; the wounded and the sick howled together. Moustakas had long since been silenced for ever. I watched by the old King, and the tumult kept me awake all night. Ah ! my dear sir, how long seems the night to a man who is not sure of the morrow !

The morning of Tuesday broke dark and rainy. The sky began to cloud over at sunrise, and a thick grey rain fell impartially on our friends and our enemies. But if we were sufficiently wide-awake to keep our arms and our cartridges dry, General Colidza's army had not taken the same precautions, and at the first engagement we scored all along the line. The enemy did not shelter himself properly, and his fire was, thanks to the night's potations, singularly unsteady. I was determined to join actively in the fray, so took up a gun, and I fear to no good purpose.

Hadji Stavros wanted to follow my example, and endeavour to use his gun, but the state of his hands rendered it impossible. His extremities were swoflen and painful, and with my usual frankness I told him that this incapacity for work would perhaps last as long as himself.

Towards nine o'clock, the enemy, who answered our fire very methodically, suddenly turned their backs. I heard a furious discharge, evidently not meant for us, and concluded that our friend Colidza had allowed himself to be surprised in the rear. What unknown ally was rendering us such good service? Was it prudent to effect a junction, and demolish our barricades?

I desired nothing better, but the King thought of the Line, and Tambouris bit his moustache. All our doubts were soon dissipated. A voice I knew cried, "All right!" and three young men armed to the teeth sprang like so many tigers towards us, cleared the barricade, and fell pell-mell into our midst. Harris and Lobster had in each hand a six-chambered revolver, Giacomo a musket, the butt-end upwards, like a club—his only manner of using a fire-arm.

Had a thunderbolt fallen at our feet, it would have produced less effect than the entry of these men, who showered bullets right and left, and killed all who came within reach. My three comrades, drunk with excitement, noise, and victory, perceived neither Hadji nor myself. They saw only men to shoot, and God knows they shot them swiftly enough.

Our poor champions, surprised, amazed, con-

fused, were killed before they had time to look round, or to defend themselves. Even I, who would have wished to save them, could not make myself heard. My voice was covered by the noise of the shots, and the shouts of the victors. Dimitrius, hidden between Hadji and myself, joined his voice to mine, but in vain. Harris, Lobster, Giacomo, ran about, and fired, each one counting the shots in his own tongue.

"One!" said Lobster.

"Two!" answered Harris.

"Tre, quattro, cinque!" cried Giacomo.

The fifth was Tambouris. His head burst under the gun like a fresh nut ground by a stone, while his body fell into the fountain like a packet of rags a laundress throws into the water. My friends were terrible, yet gallant, and seemed to revel in their frightful work. They killed with a joyous ferocity, considering themselves instruments of justice. The wind and the rapidity of their march had carried away their caps, their eyes were full of hate and murder: this avenging trio might have passed for an incarnation of the genius of Destruction.

When they had mowed down all before them, and no enemies remained but three or four wounded lying on the ground, they paused to

take breath. Harris was the first to think of me. Giacomo had but one care, to know if among the others he had killed Hadji Stavros. Harris cried out with all his might :

" Hermann, where are you ? "

" Here ! " said I, and all three ran towards me.

The King of the Mountains, weak as he was, laid a hand on my shoulder, put his back to the rock, looked earnestly at these men who had killed so many to get to him, and said in a firm voice : " I am Hadji Stavros ! "

You know that my friends had long desired the opportunity to punish the old Palikar. They had looked forward to his death as to a great triumph of justice. They wanted to avenge the girls of Mistra, and a thousand others, as well as myself. And yet, I was not obliged to restrain them.

There was still so much grandeur in this ruined hero, that their rage suddenly changed to astonishment. They were all three young, of an age when a disarmed enemy inspires compassion. I told them in a few words how the King had defended me against all his band, even in his dying state, and on the very day that I had poisoned him. I explained the nature of the fight they had interrupted, of the barricade they had cleared, and of

the strange war in which they had intervened to kill our defenders.

"So much the worse for them!" said John Harris. "Like justice, our eyes were blinded. If the rascals died with a good intention in their minds, no doubt they will be credited with it up above. I've no objection."

"As to the help of which we have deprived you," said Lobster, "don't mind that. With two revolvers in our hands and two in our pockets, we're as good as four-and-twenty men. We've killed these; the others have only to come. Isn't that so, Giacomo?"

"Oh!" answered the Maltese, "my blood's up, and I'd kill a drove of bulls. And when you think that I have to pass my life sealing letters with a pair of fists like that!"

The enemy, however, recovered from his stupor, had returned to the siege. Three or four brigands having looked over the rampart had seen the carnage.

Colidza did not know what to think of the three plagues whom he had seen strike his friends and his enemies, but thought that poison or the sword must have delivered him from the old King. He prudently ordered the destruction of our defensive works. We were out of sight,

sheltered against a wall, at ten paces from the stairs.

The noise of the falling stones warned my friends that it was time to reload their arms. Hadji allowed them to do so, and then asked Harris: "Where is Photini?"

"On board my ship."

"You have not done her any harm?"

"Do you think that I've taken lessons from you in torturing young girls?"

"Your reproach is just: I am a miserable old man. Forgive me, and promise to forgive Photini."

"Why the devil shouldn't I? Now that I have got Hermann, I'll give her back to you when you like."

"Without a ransom?"

"You old fool!"

"You'll see," said the King, "if I am only an old fool."

He passed his left arm around Dimitrius's neck, put out his trembling hand to the hilt of his sabre, drew it with difficulty from the sheath, and walked to the steps where the insurgents were hesitatingly showing themselves. On seeing him they drew back as if the earth had opened to allow the great judge of the lower regions to pass.

There were fifteen or twenty of them, all armed, but not one dared to defend, excuse himself, or even attempt to fly. They trembled before their resuscitated King. Hadji Stavros marched straight to Colidza, who, paler and much more prostrated than the others, endeavoured to conceal himself. Hadji raised his arm with a painful effort, and with one blow cut off the villain's ignoble head. Then another trembling fit seized him ; he let fall his sabre near the corpse and did not deign to pick it up.

"Let us go," said he ; "my sheath is empty ; the blade, henceforth, is useless like myself."

His old companions approached to ask pardon. Some entreated him not to leave them, saying that they would not know what to do without him. He answered not a word, but begged us to take him to Castia to get horses, and then to Salamis to join Photini.

The brigands allowed us to leave without hindrance. At the end of a short distance my friends saw that I could hardly drag myself along. Giacomo helped me, and Harris asked if I was wounded. The poor King cast an imploring look towards me, and I told my friends that in trying to escape I had hurt my feet. We descended the mountain paths slowly, pursued by the cries of the

wounded and the loud voices of the bandits we had left behind us.

As we approached the village the weather cleared and the paths became drier. The first ray of sunshine delighted me, and seemed to give me back some of my strength. But Hadji paid no attention to what was passing around him; he was buried in his own reflections. It is no light thing to break with the habits of half a century.

Arrived at Castia we met the monk, who was carrying a swarm in his sack. He was very civil, and excused himself for not having been to see us since the day before. The shots had frightened him. With a wave of his hand the King passed on.

My friends' horses awaited them with their guide at the fountain. I asked why there were four of them, and learned that M. Mérinay had accompanied them, but that having dismounted to examine a curious stone, he had not since reappeared.

Giacomo put me on my horse; the King, aided by Dimitrius, mounted on his; Harris and his nephew jumped into their saddles; and the Maltese, Dimitrius, and the guide walked.

On the way I approached Harris, and he told me how Photini had fallen into his hands.

"I arrived," said he, "from my cruise, glad to

have settled half-a-dozen pirates. I anchored at the Piræus at six o'clock, landed, and as I hadn't seen a soul but my officers for a week, promised myself a good time. I took a cab for the evening, and when I got to our place found every one in a state of consternation. They were all there for supper—Christodulos, Maroula, Dimitrius, Giacomo, William, Mérinay, and the little girl who came every Sunday, more gorgeously dressed than ever. William told me what had happened to you. Guess if I was furious not to have been there! The little one assured me he had done all he could, and tried everywhere to find six hundred pounds; but his allowance and credit are small, and he failed. Then, in despair, he asked Mérinay, but the good saint declared his money was lent to intimate friends, and that he could do nothing.

"'Oh!' said I to Lobster, 'that's soon settled. We'll pay the old villain in lead. Of what use is it to you to be a better shot than Nimrod, if you can only break pieces off the portico of Socrates' prison? We must organize a Palikar hunt. Once I refused to go to Central Africa, and I still regret it. But this is better. It's more amusing to hunt game that will defend itself. Make a provision of powder and balls, and to-morrow we will begin our campaign.'

"As you may suppose, William took the bait at once. Giacomo struck the table one of his blows, and swore that he would accompany us; but the most ardent of all was M. Mérinay. He wanted to steep his hands in the blood of the rascals. His services were accepted, but I offered to buy of him all the game he could bring back. He forced his little voice in the most comical fashion, showed his lady-like fists, and said 'that Hadji Stavros would have to count with him.'

"Of course I laughed; one always laughs on the eve of a battle. Lobster was delighted to think he would show the brigands the progress he had made. Giacomo, nearly wild with fury, grinned from ear to ear, and cracked his nuts quicker than ever. M. Mérinay was radiant—no longer a man, he seemed a sort of demigod.

"Excepting ourselves, all those present pulled long faces. The fat Maroula did nothing but cross herself; Dimitrius raised his eyes to heaven, while the lieutenant of the phalanx advised us to think twice before attacking the King of the Mountains. But the flat-nosed girl, whom you've nicknamed '*Crinolina invariabilis*,' was quite comical in her grief. She sighed lackadaisically, and only pretended to eat; in fact, didn't make the supper of a sparrow."

"She's a good girl, Harris."

"Quite so, if you like; but you're indulgent. I can't forgive her those long dresses that are always getting under the feet of my chair, the horrible scent of patchouli that she spreads around her, and the languishing looks she bestows on us all.

"I really don't think she can see a water-bottle without ogling it. But if she pleases you, I've nothing to say. She left us to return to her school at nine, and I wished her a safe journey. Two minutes afterward I took leave of our friends, giving them rendezvous for next day, went out, woke up my cabby, and by all that's wonderful! who should I find seated in the carriage but '*Crinolina invariabilis*,' with the confectioner's servant.

"She put a finger on her lips; I got in without a word, and we started. 'Mr. Harris,' said she, and in tolerable English too, 'swear to me that you will not carry out your plans against the King of the Mountains!'

"I began to laugh, and she to cry. She declared that I should be killed. I answered: 'No, I shall do for the brigands.' She entreated me not to harm Hadji Stavros. I asked why; and at last, finding nothing more to say, exclaimed as

they do in the fifth act of a melodrama: 'He is my father!'

"Thereupon I began to think seriously—for once in a way. It occurred to me that I might get back one lost friend without risking the skins of two or three others, and I said to the young woman: 'Your father loves you?'

"'More than his life.'

"'He never has refused you anything?'

"'Nothing I really wanted.'

"'And if you wrote that you want Mr. Hermann Schultz, would he send him to you at once?'

"'No!'

"'You are sure?'

"'Absolutely sure.'

"'Then, young lady, there is but one thing to do. I'll beat him at his own game; carry you off on board the *Fancy*, and keep you as a hostage until Hermann's return.'

"'Just what I meant to propose,' was the answer. 'In that way, and in that way only, will my papa give you back your friend.'"

"Well, and don't you admire the poor girl who loves you enough to give herself thus into your hands?"

"What for? She wanted to save her rascal of

a father, and knew quite well that we should be too much for him. Besides, I promised to treat her with all due respect. She cried until we reached the Piræus, and I consoled her as best I could. She went on muttering, 'I'm a lost girl!' and I proved to her by A plus B that she'd be found again.

"On the quay I made her get out, and sent her on board my pinnace with the servant. Then I wrote a peremptory letter to the old brigand, which the servant took back to the town together with a message to Dimitrius.

"Since then the charming Niobe remains in undisturbed possession of my cabin, and orders have been given to treat her like a king's daughter. Until Monday evening I waited for her father's answer. Then I lost patience, and returning to my first idea, invoked the aid of our friends, and you know the rest. Now it's your turn, and surely your yarn—well, it cannot be a short one!"

"In a moment," said I; "I must first have a word with Hadji Stavros."

I approached the King and whispered: "I can't think why I told you that Photini loves John Harris. Fright must have turned my head. I've just been talking to him, and I swear to you

on the head of my father that she is as indifferent to him as if he never had spoken to her."

The old man thanked me, and I went back to tell John my adventures with Mary-Ann.

"Bravo!" cried he. "I did think that the romance was not complete without a little love in it, and now I find a good deal."

"Excuse me, there's no love at all in this; but sincere friendship on one side, a little gratitude on the other. Nothing more, I think, is required to make a reasonable and well-assorted marriage."

"Marry, my dear friend, and I'll be your best man."

"You richly deserve that honour, John."

"When shall you see her again? I'd give much to be present at the meeting."

"I should like to surprise her, and meet her as if by chance."

"An excellent idea! The day after to-morrow there will be, as you know, a Court ball. You're invited; so am I. The card is at Christodulos's house on your table. Until then, old chap, you must remain on board with me to recover a little. Your hair is singed, and your feet are sore. There's time to put all that to rights."

It was six o'clock in the evening when the Captain's boat took us on board the *Fancy*. The

King was so weak that he had to be carried on deck. Photini, like Niobe, all in tears, threw herself into his arms. Doubtless she was relieved to find that those she loved had survived the battle; but her father looked a broken-down man, older by twenty years than when she last had seen him.

Perhaps also she suffered from the visible indifference of Harris. He led her up to the King with thorough American *façon*, saying: "Now we've settled up. You've given me back my friend, and I return you the young lady. One good turn deserves another. Ready reckonings make fast friends. And now, most venerable Chief, under what favoured sky will you go and get hanged? For I don't believe you're the sort of man to retire from business!"

"Excuse me," said the King haughtily, "I have ended my career as brigand for ever. What should I do now in the mountain? All my men are dead, wounded, or dispersed. I might raise others, but these hands that have bent so many heads refuse to serve me any longer. I leave my place to younger men than myself, but I defy them to rival my success or renown.

"You ask what I am going to do with the few years remaining to me. I do not yet know, but be assured that my time will be well spent. I

have to settle my daughter in life, and to dictate my Memoirs. Perhaps, even if the shocks I have lately borne do not permanently weaken my brain, I may devote my experience and talents to the service of the State. Let the good God and the saints grant me a sound mind, and ere six months have passed I shall be President of the Cabinet!"

CHAPTER VIII

THE COURT BALL

On Thursday, May 16, John Harris, in full uniform, took me back to our old boarding-house. Our worthy hosts received me warmly, but sighed over and seemed very sorry for the fate of the Mountain King. As for me, I embraced them heartily. I was so happy to be alive, and to see again none but friends around me. My feet were healed, my hair had been put in order, and I had feasted like Lucullus, and so I felt uncommonly comfortable. Dimitrius assured me that Mrs. Simons and Mary-Ann were invited to the ball, that a dress for the young lady had just been taken home from the first dressmakers in Athens to the Hôtel des Etrangers, and I rejoiced at the thought of the surprise which awaited Mary-Ann when she should once more behold me, and in Court dress.

Christodulos offered me a glass of his glorious wine, and really it seemed to restore freedom, health, and happiness. Before entering my room

I knocked at M. Mérinay's door. He received me seated in the midst of a confused mass of books and papers.

"Dear sir," said he heroically, "you see a man worn out with work. I have discovered at Castia an antique inscription, which deprived me of the pleasure of striking a blow in your defence, and which, for the last two days, has given me much anxiety. I have assured myself that it is genuine. No one ever has seen it before me; I shall have the honour of the discovery; my name will be attached to it for ever. The stone is a small monument of shelly-limestone, about thirty-five inches high and twenty-two inches wide. The characters are of a good period, and perfectly cut. This is the inscription as I have copied it in my pocket-book:

S. T. X. X. I. I.
M. D. C. C. C. L. I.

"If I succeed in interpreting it, my fortune is made. I shall be created Member of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres of Pont-Audémar.

"But the task of deciphering is a long and difficult one, for Antiquity guards her secrets with a jealous care. I much fear that I have met with a monument relating to the Eleusinian mysteries.

In this case, two interpretations might be required —the one popular, or demotic; the other sacred, or hieratic. But give me, I beg of you, your opinion."

"Which is that of a dunce," I replied. "I believe that you have discovered a post of which one sees so many on the high-roads, and that the inscription that has given you so much trouble can be thus translated: 'Stade, 22, 1851!' And now, good-evening, dear M. Mérinay. I'm going to write to my father, and then array myself in my embroidered uniform to attend the State ball to-night."

My letter to my parents was an ode, a hymn, a song of triumphant happiness. The joy of my heart seemed to transmit itself to the paper, to flow from my pen like ink. I invited the whole family, including Aunt Rosenthaler, to my wedding; begged my father to sell the inn at once and at whatever price, and my brothers to take to some other employment. I took the responsibility upon myself, and promised to provide for them all.

Without losing a minute, I sealed my dispatch and sent it by express on board a boat belonging to the Austrian Lloyd's at the Piræus, which was to start next morning at six o'clock. "In this

way," thought I, "they will hear of my happiness almost as soon as myself."

At a quarter to nine, accompanied by Harris, I entered the Palace with military punctuality. None of my other comrades had yet arrived. My three-cornered hat was perhaps a little rusty, but that did not much matter, seeing the brilliancy shed around by the multitude of wax-lights. My sword was seven or eight inches too short. But what did that signify? Courage is not measured by the length of a weapon, and without vanity I had the right to pass for a hero. The red coat was tight, especially under the arm, and the sleeve-cuffs did not reach to the wrists; but, as father had foretold, the embroidery looked extremely well.

The ball-room was decorated with some taste, and splendidly illuminated. On one side, behind the thrones of the King and Queen, chairs were reserved for the ladies; on the other stood those intended for the men. I cast an eager glance round, but Mary-Ann had not yet arrived.

At nine o'clock, I saw the King and Queen enter the ball-room, preceded by the Mistress of the Robes, the Marshal of the Palace, the ladies of honour, and the aides-de-camp. Among others, Mr. George Micrommatis was especially pointed out to me. The King wore a magnificent Palikar

costume, and the Queen a dress, the supreme elegance of which proved its Parisian origin. The splendour of the dresses, and, above all, of the national costumes, did not dazzle me sufficiently to make me forget Mary-Ann, and I watched the entrance-door with unspeakable impatience.

The members of the diplomatic corps, and the principal guests, formed a circle round the King and Queen, who conversed cordially with them for about half-an-hour.

I was in the last row with Harris, and an officer, who stood before us, drew back so awkwardly that he put his foot on mine, and I could not help crying out. He turned to excuse himself, and I recognized Captain Pericles, newly decorated with the Order of the Redeemer. He asked pardon and inquired after my health, whereupon I told him that my salubrity was no business of his.

Harris, who knew the whole story, now pressed forward and said :

"Is it not Mr. Pericles whom I have the honour of addressing?"

"Precisely."

"Charmed to meet you, sir. May I request you to accompany me for a moment into the next room? It is still empty, and we shall be alone."

"At your orders, sir," replied the amazed Per-

icles, who, paler than a soldier just leaving hospital, followed us with a sickly smile on his abject countenance. As soon as he entered the room he faced John Harris, and said: "I wait to hear what you have to say to me, sir."

John answered by tearing off the cross attached to its new ribbon, and put it in his own pocket.

"There, sir, that's all I have to say to you!"

"Sir!" exclaimed the astounded Captain, making a step backward.

"No noise, sir, I beg. If you care for this plaything, you can send two of your friends to fetch it from John Harris, of the United States of America, in command of the *Fancy*."

"Sir," said Pericles, "I don't know by what right you take from me a cross worth fifteen francs, and which I shall be obliged to replace at my own expense."

"Oh! if that's all, here's a twenty-shilling piece —ten francs for the cross, and five for the ribbon. If there is anything over, pray drink my health with it."

"In that case, it only remains for me to thank you," and, so saying, Pericles bowed without a word; but his evil eyes glared menacingly at both of us.

"My dear Hermann, you and your intended

wife will do well to leave this country as soon as possible. That man looks a thorough blackguard. As for me, I shall stay here a week to give him an opportunity for settling with me, after which I shall obey the order that sends me to Japan."

"I'm sorry," said I, "that you went so far. I really do not like leaving Greece without one or two specimens of the *Borgana variabilis*. I have only one incomplete specimen, without roots, and I left it up there in my tin-box."

"Make a drawing of your plant, and give it to Lobster and Giacomo. They'll perform a pilgrimage in the mountain to look for it. But, for God's sake, place yourself and your happiness in safety without delay!"

Meanwhile, "my happiness" was not visible. I searched for her among the dancers, but in vain, and towards midnight began to lose all hope. At last I left the larger room and seated myself in the adjacent apartment, and began to watch in absent-minded condition a party of whist-players, who seemed indisposed to rely entirely upon chance. I began to be interested in their dexterity when a silvery laugh made my heart stand still, and then to beat violently. Mary-Ann was behind me!

My sight almost failed, and I dared not turn towards her; but I felt her presence, and my joy

nearly stifled me. I never knew what made her laugh—perhaps some ridiculous dress; there are always some funny dresses at an official ball. At last it occurred to me that I was standing opposite a mirror. I looked, and without being seen, saw her—I mean Mary-Ann—standing near her mother and uncle. She appeared more radiantly lovely than on the day when first we met.

Three rows of pearls were entwined round her lovely throat. Her fine eyes shone like stars, her teeth glittered like polished ivory, and the light played in the masses of her beautiful auburn hair. Her dress was possibly not more beautiful than that of scores of other young girls present; but at any rate she did not wear a bird of paradise on her head like Mrs. Simons.

Her skirt was, I remember, looped up at intervals by bunches of natural flowers; she had flowers in her bodice and in her hair. But *what* the flowers were, my dear sir, you never will guess. When I saw them I was transported. They were none other than the *Borgana variabilis!* Everything then had come to me at a rush. I was the happiest of men and of naturalists. I lost my head, and, turning suddenly towards her, held out my hands, crying: "It's I, Mary-Ann! I—I—Hermann!"

Would you believe it, my dear sir, instead of falling into my arms, she drew back terrified, while Mrs. Simons's head rose so high that I thought the bird of paradise would have touched the ceiling! The old gentleman took my hand, led me aside, and after examining me as if I were some curious beast, asked dryly: "Sir, have you been introduced to these ladies?"

"What does that matter, my dear Mr. Sharper? My dear uncle! I'm Hermann!—Hermann Schultz, the companion of their captivity. Ah! if you knew all I've gone through since they left. But I'll tell you all that at home."

"Yes, yes; but English custom exacts an introduction to ladies before speaking to them."

"But they know me. We have dined together often. I've rendered them a service worth four thousand pounds, you know, with the Mountain King."

"Yes, yes; but you have not been introduced."

"But don't you know that I risked death a hundred times for my dear Mary-Ann?"

"Very good; but you've not been introduced."

"But I'm engaged to marry her. Her mother has consented. Haven't you heard that I am to marry her?"

"Not till after you have been formally introduced," continued the old gentleman sternly.

"Introduce me then."

"Yes, yes, that is all very well, but you must first be introduced to me."

"Wait a bit," I answered, and then I ran like a madman through the crowd, knocking up against I don't know how many couples. Then my sword got between my legs; I slipped on the wax floor, and fell face downward. John Harris picked me up.

"Who are you looking for?"

"They're here! I have seen them, and I'm going to marry Mary-Ann; but first I must be introduced to them—it's the English fashion. Help me, my dear friend! Where are they? Did you see a tall woman with a bird of paradise in her head-dress?"

"Yes. She has just left the ball-room with a very pretty girl."

"Left the ball-room! But she's Mary-Ann's mother!"

"Be quiet, old fellow. We'll find her, and I'll have you introduced by the American Minister."

"Yes; that will do. I'll show you her uncle, Edward Sharper. I left him here. But where has he gone? He can't be far."

Uncle Edward had also disappeared. I dragged poor Harris out into the Square, in front of the Royal Palace, to the Hôtel des Étrangers. There were lights in Mrs. Simons's rooms, but after a short time they disappeared. Every one had gone to bed.

"Let us follow their example," said Harris. "Sleep will restore your nerves. To-morrow, between one and two o'clock, I will settle your affair."

My night was more restless even than any of those I had passed among the brigands. Harris slept with me, which means that he didn't close his eyes. We could hear the carriages of the royal guests going home down Hermes Street. At five the sleep of exhaustion overcame me.

Three hours later Dimitrius entered into the room, crying: "I've news—great news!"

"What news?"

"Your Englishwomen have just left."

"Where for?"

"Trieste."

"Dimitrius, are you sure?"

"I took them to the boat."

"My poor friend," said Harris, pressing my hands; "gratitude imposes itself, but, alas! love cannot be forced!"

"Alas!" repeated Dimitrius. The words found an echo in the youth's heart.

Since that day, my dear sir, I have lived like the beasts of the field—eating, drinking, breathing. My collections were sent to Hamburg without a single flower of the *Borgana variabilis*. On the day after the ball my friends took me to the French steamer, but thought it prudent to do so at night, not wishing to meet either Pericles or his men. We arrived safely at the Piræus, but when about five-and-twenty fathoms from the shore, the balls from a half-dozen invisible guns whistled past our ears. It was the farewell of the handsome Captain and his charming country.

I have roamed the mountains of Malta, Sicily, and the Italian Peninsula, and my herbal has become rich in curious specimens, while I have remained poor. Happily my father did not dispose of the inn, and a letter from him, received at Messina, tells me that my efforts are appreciated over there; so, perhaps, when I return, I shall find a position, but I have now made a law unto myself—never to count anything as sure in this world.

Harris is on his way to Japan, and I may hear from him in a year or two. Little Lobster wrote

to me at Rome, that he is always practising shooting. Giacomo continues to seal letters by day, and crack nuts in the evening. M. Mérinay has found a much more ingenious meaning for his inscription than the one I suggested, and his great work on Demosthenes will certainly be published one day.

The King of the Mountains has built himself a large mansion on the Pentelicos road, with a guard-house to lodge five-and-twenty devoted Palikars. He has also hired a small abode in the modern city over the borders of the great stream. He receives much, and uses his utmost efforts to become Minister of Justice, but some time will probably elapse before he succeeds. Photini is mistress of his house. Dimitrius occasionally sups and sighs in the kitchen.

I never have heard a word of Mrs. Simons, of Mr. Sharper, or of Mary-Ann. If this silence continues, I shall soon cease to think of them. Now and then I dream that I stand before her, and that my long thin face is reflected in her deep brown eyes.

Then I awake, shed bitter tears, and curse my fate. What I regret is not, believe me, the woman—but the fortune and position I had missed! It was well for me that I did not lose

my heart, and every day I am thankful my temperament renders me impermeable to Cupid's darts. My dear sir, how much more to be pitied I should be had I really fallen in love with Mary-Ann!

CHAPTER IX

A LETTER FROM ATHENS

On the very day that I was going to send Mr. Hermann Schultz's story to the publisher's, my honoured correspondent in Athens returned me the manuscript with the following letter:

"Sir:

"The history of the King of the Mountains is an invention of some enemy of truth and of—the police. None of the persons named in it have appeared in Greece. No passport, bearing the name of Mrs. Simons, ever has been viséd. The Commander of the Piræus never has heard of the *Fancy*, nor of Mr. John Harris. Messrs. Philip & Co. do not remember having employed Mr. William Lobster. No diplomatic agent has in his office a Maltese called Giacomo Fondi. The National Bank of Greece is not without reproach, but never has had in its hands funds whose origin could be traced to brigandage. If that had been the case, the bank would certainly have confiscated the money. I hold at your disposal a list of

our carabineer officers. No one of the name of Pericles is to be found in it. I only know two men so called. One is an innkeeper in Athens, the other a grocer at Tripolitza.

"As for the famous Hadji Stavros—whose name I have heard to-day for the first time—he belongs entirely to mythology. I confess that, formerly, there were brigands in Greece. The most important of them were destroyed by Hercules and Theseus, whom we may perhaps look upon as the original founders of our Grecian police. Those who escaped them have fallen under the blows of our invincible army.

"The author of the romance you sent me has shown as much ignorance as bad faith, in affecting to believe in the actual existence of brigandage. I would give much to have his portrait published either in France or England, together with his absurd story. The world would then learn by what clumsy artifices certain persons endeavour to compromise us in the eyes of civilized nations.

"As for you, sir, who have always rendered us justice, I beg you to believe in the assurance of my most distinguished sentiments.

"Yours gratefully and obediently,

"PATRIOTIS PSEPTIS"

(Author of a volume of dithyrambi on the Regeneration of Greece, editor of *Hope*, member of the Archæological Society of Athens, correspondent of the Academy of the Ionian Islands, shareholder in the National Company of the Spartan Pavlos).

THE AUTHOR AGAIN SPEAKS:

"My good Athenian friend, the truest histories are not always those that have really come to pass."

THE PORTRAITS OF EDMOND ABOUT

THE PORTRAITS OF EDMOND ABOUT

EDMOND ABOUT
At the age of twenty-five.
After an unpublished portrait made at Naples by Paul Baudry in 1853.

ASSUREDLY Edmond About was one of the most active among men of letters; one of the most stirring, and the most censorious, in French politics under the Second Empire. Not only was he the head of that young generation of writers, who left the École Normale with an ambition to realize part of the Voltairian theories, but he also became the type of the impetuous journalist, irreducible and intransitive, such as existed in the days of that good-natured tyrant, Napoleon III.

to his widow, who lives surrounded by all the paintings, engravings, and photographs that were ever done of her lamented husband.

In answer to our request, Mme. About welcomed us cordially to her house, and placed at our disposal all her cherished mementoes, even down to the smallest unpublished sketch, which line the walls of her apartment in the Rue Mansart in Paris. It is these portraits mostly, carefully redrawn by a conscientious artist, that we reproduce here, and that we now propose to pass in review.

EDMOND ABOUT
About 1867.
After an engraving by Geoffroy published in the magazine *L'Artiste.*

Edmond About left the École Normale in 1851, just about the time of the *coup d'état* of the 2d of December. We can understand then his ill-humour towards the Empire, which seemed to have shattered all the republican hopes of the young professor. The first portrait, here published for the first time, represents the youth at the age of twenty-five, when he had just made the acquaintance at Naples of the renowned young painter, Paul Baudry. This artist drew a

pencil sketch of his friend in morning dress ; the shirt open at the throat, an irate expression, the mustache sulkily twisted over the lips, the whiskers waved like those of a little attaché of embassy. At this period About was going to the École Française of Athens, as one would go into exile, with a look of vengeance in his eyes, and a bitterness round the mouth ; for he had hoped for better things than this career of professorship, which seemed at this moment to be his only perspective, and which possessed very little attraction for him. In this crayon drawing by Paul Baudry it is difficult to recognise the real type of Edmond About, which only becomes confirmed about five years later in the oil painting by Giacommetti, taken on the return of the young scholar from Athens, and after he had spent several months in Rome, no doubt collecting materials for his future study on the Eternal City.

EDMOND ABOUT
About 1860.
After a painting by Lehmann, not reproduced before.

This picture, painted in broad, bold touches, shows already a much more gentle look than that of Paul Baudry. The laughing face, the good-

EDMOND ABOUT
At the age of forty.
After a photograph by Carjat.

natured expression so characteristic of Edmond About, is clearly seen in this portrait, which, moreover, is very distinctive of the period in which it was painted. These first works, taken from life, are those which give the most artistic whole of the countenance of the author of *Germaine*. We regret being unable to reproduce in colours Giacommetti's picture. Painted against a yellow background, it is superb, both in colouring and execution.

We do not find its equivalent until a few years later, when Paul Baudry, meeting Edmond About again in Paris on the latter's return from Russia, painted from his model of 1853, already old, since we believe the date to have been 1868, that marvellous portrait of Edmond About in a fur cap, looking like a powerful Hungarian Magyar. A copperplate engraving of it forms the frontispiece of this volume.

After 1860 Edmond About, great diffuser of knowledge that he was, became principally the

master journalist, the good-natured worker and companion, amiable, with a smile for every one, as we see him represented in the greater part of the engraved portraits which so frequently appeared on the fly-sheets or in advertisements of his novels. Thus is he shown to us in the print by O. Jahyer done about 1864. The face is notably softened, the forehead has expanded, and the hair has that curl and that peculiar prominence over the temples which at that time was the fashionable mark of the "lions" of the Boulevard. The smile is sceptical and friendly, the eyes malicious, intellectual, tender almost. The beard frames well the full cheeks, and the whole appearance of the man gives an impression of happiness.

EDMOND ABOUT
In 1870.
After a drawing by Émile Bayard.

Some years later in the print by Geoffroy (1867), About looks already more worn. That year no doubt was for him a period of much fatigue ; because in the portraits taken in the following years, as well as in the previous picture by Lehmann,

the great master of that time, and also in a photograph by Carjat, we find About at the ages of thirty and forty superbly developed in strength, in smile, and in virility. At the same time we think that the most truthful portrait, and the one which shows the author of *Tolla* in his real light, and reproduces best his fine plastic expression, is the drawing of the sarcastic journalist done by Émile Bayard some time before the Franco-German war, in that hour when fortune and success smiled on the amiable grandson of Voltaire. About was then at the very height of his fame. Carrier-Belleuse did a bust of him, which is not of much interest, and Crauk, the sculptor, also modelled his head, but we cannot here reproduce these plastic documents. All the most reputed photographers and illustrators of Paris held it an honour to perpetuate the features of the author of *Maître Pierre*. Almost every literary circle had forgotten the dramatic mishaps of the theatrical writer of *Gaëtana*. The humorist who had published the *Nez d'un Notaire*

EDMOND ABOUT.
After an engraving by Carjat about 1865.

had completely reinstated himself in the good graces of the literary circles, and the students of Paris, who had formerly so maltreated him, were the first to applaud his glory, and his articles full of vehement criticism.

Edmond About with Francisque Sarcey, his intimate friend, his *alter ego*, so to speak, as chamberlain, was the literary king of Paris. Men vied with each other as to who should flatter him most ; a few lines written by him and distributed among the young men of letters, conferred a reputation upon them at once. Carjat's portrait on page 314 is very representative of the man we speak of : fully self-possessed, having realized his most cherished ambitions.

EDMOND ABOUT.
After a caricature by André Gill in 1875.

As fame here below has always as its reverse side the search after the ridiculous and the exaggerated, the caricaturists naturally took possession of Edmond About's personality. One could make a considerable collection of the satirical drawings which disfigured the æsthetic features of the author of *L'Homme à l'Oreille Cassée*, but we should not think of publishing here even a selection of

EDMOND ABOUT
In 1877.
After a photograph by Tourlin.

these caricatures. Such compositions are always like the symbols of events and actualities, from which they derive their origin, and of which they become the mysterious enigmas. Each of them would need an explanatory note, which would carry us far away from our subject. We publish only one caricature of Edmond About, drawn by André Gill, who was a master of the art, in the year 1875; because this portrait is synthetical of the director of the XIX Century newspaper, which was the last political pamphlet founded by the great controversialist. The last portraits of Edmond About show him to us in his green old age, which has nothing decadent or even venerable in it. Up to his last hour the valiant novelist, like most men of thought and of active intellectual labour, preserved the appearance of strength and virility which does not abdicate. The last two figures seen in these pages, which were done in 1877 and 1880, go to prove the justice of our remarks. About is represented as a powerful Al-

satian, in whose hair and beard run the silver threads of old age, but without in any way detracting from the clearness and firmness of the features.

There comes, it is said, a time in life when the powers of the body become displaced and retire into the mind. With some men, as with Edmond About, those powers remain like potent forces maintaining intact till the day of death the expression of life, strenuous and headstrong.

OCTAVE UZANNE.

EDMOND ABOUT.
From his last photograph taken by Liebert in 1880.

THE END